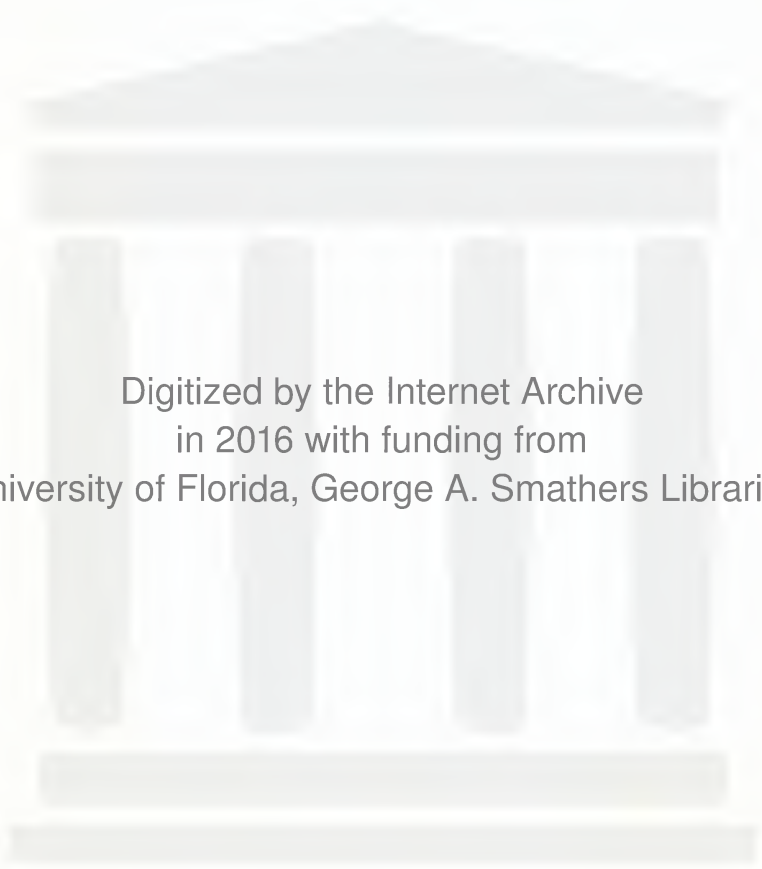


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THE ALABAMA HISTORICAL QUARTERLY



Vol. XLIV

SPRING & SUMMER, 1982

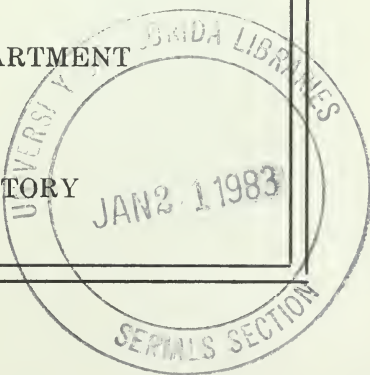
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IN MEMORY OF

MILO BARRETT HOWARD, JR.

Director

Alabama State Department
of Archives and History

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MILO BARRETT HOWARD, JR.

It was my happy privilege to have been a member of the Board of Trustees of the Alabama Department of Archives and History when in 1967 Milo Barrett Howard, Jr. was elevated to the position of Director of that important arm of State Government. He first began working at the Alabama Archives in 1952 while Mrs. Marie Bankhead Owen was directing its activities. Subsequently in 1958 he became a staff member during the time Mr. Peter A. Brannon was the Alabama Archives Director.

Milo Howard graduated from Auburn University with a B.A. degree and later earned an M.A. degree from the same Institution. Livingston University conferred an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree upon him in recognition of his contribution to the education and happiness of the people of his native state.

Howard was born in Montgomery, October 21, 1933, where he attended public schools and was graduated from Sidney Lanier High School. He loved the people of the city in which he first saw the light of day. Indeed it was difficult to pose a historical question relating to Montgomery and Alabama that he could not answer. His inquisitive mind collected and maintained a remarkable range of facts and fancy.

His tall, svelte figure attired in well tailored clothes with a gold headed walking cane in hand attracted immediate attention. His bland, cultured voice was heard and appreciated in almost every nook and corner of the commonwealth about which he was so knowledgeable.

Milo Howard was ever aware of the contributions his associates at the Alabama Archives made for the preservation, display and protection of valuable items placed in their, and his, custody. He delighted in telling of his fellow workers' capabilities and their loyalties. He considered the group a team.

On November 3, 1981, following an illness of ten weeks, he passed on to his reward. During all the years I knew Milo Howard he was an outstanding and an upstanding Southern

gentleman. It is in his memory that this issue of the *Alabama Historical Quarterly* is dedicated.

Statement of C. J. Coley
Chairman of the Board of Trustees,
Alabama Department of Archives and History

September 13, 1982

MEMORIAL TO A TIMELESS MAN

by Emily S. Adams

Milo Barrett Howard, Jr., director of the Alabama State Department of Archives and History from 1967 to 1981, once declared that "In this department, we don't consider that all history has led up to our time. We recognize that history is a present and future phenomena as well.¹ I'm like a mother with her children. She's most interested at the time in the one who needs the most attention. That's the way I am with the department, and the contents are my children."²

His principal concerns were in the area of state and local history guiding researchers in the use of the raw materials of Alabama history, stimulating interest in studying local history, and relating local and state history to national and international history. He was one of the prime figures in preserving historic sites and structures in Alabama, and he was also an important supporter of cultural endeavors in Montgomery and Alabama.³

He has been called a bookworm, appearing to have been born to be director of the State Archives. He was frequently and regularly called upon by researchers in urgent need of illumination on some historical point and with patience and good cheer he would ferret out the facts if they were anywhere possible to be found. Alabama's Department of Archives and History is regarded by scholars of history to be one of the most valuable sources of history in or about the South.⁴

Born in Montgomery on October 21, 1933, he was the son of Milo Barrett Howard and Mary Josepha Key.⁵ Mr. Howard's great great grandfather, Neill Blue, came to Montgomery in 1819 and in 1825 lived on the same land that is presently oc-

¹"Visitors to Archives Building Seldom See Real 'Inner Sanctum'," *Alabama Journal*, April 16, 1967.

²"This is Their South," *Southern Living*, May 1972.

³Notes in the Milo Howard file in the Library clipping files in the Alabama Department of Archives and History.

⁴"The Archives are in Good Hands," *Alabama Journal*, January 23, 1967.

⁵"Memoranda for Biographical Sketch," in the Milo Howard file in the Library clipping files in the Archives.

cupied by the Archives building, giving Mr. Howard unique ties to the land.⁶ Earlier ancestors had lived in Baltimore, Maryland; Augusta, Georgia; and Macon County, Alabama.⁷ Milo Barrett, his grandfather, was the owner of the *Montgomery Advertiser* in 1864 and 1865.⁸

Mr. Howard attended Montgomery schools through high school: Decatur Street Grammar School, Baldwin Junior High School, and Sidney Lanier High School. In 1951 he entered the Alabama Polytechnic Institute at Auburn and in 1955 received a Bachelor of Arts degree with majors in history, English, and foreign language.⁹ The J. A. Kirkly Award in English was presented to him in 1954 by Alabama Polytechnic Institute.¹⁰ On March 15, 1960 he earned his masters of arts in history and became the first person to graduate with a regular diploma from Auburn University¹¹ which had been newly created by the Legislature in recognition of its broadened academic program out of Alabama Polytechnic Institute.¹² He attended Jones Law School in Montgomery from 1963-1964.¹³ In 1978 he received an honorary doctor of humane letters from Livingston University in honor of his contributions to the teaching, writing and preservation of Alabama history.¹⁴

While a student in college Mr. Howard worked at the Archives during summer vacations beginning in 1952 and except for his tour of duty in the United States Army Reserve continued at the Archives until his death.¹⁵ From 1955 to 1957 he served in the United States Army Reserve as a lieutenant in Military Intelligence. In 1958 he returned to the Archives as an Archivist and in 1964 was promoted to Assistant Director.¹⁶

⁶"Milo Howard, Jr. Heads State Archives: Named Successor to Late Dr. Peter Brannon," *Alabama Journal*, January 20, 1967.

⁷Letter from Milo B. Howard to William Crawford of June 22, 1967 held in the Milo Howard file in the Library clipping files at the Archives.

⁸"Milo B. Howard: Journal Closeup," *Alabama Journal*, October 23, 1967.

⁹"Memoranda for Biographical Sketch."

¹⁰"Auburn University. Record of Applicant," Milo Howard file in the Library clipping files at the Archives.

¹¹"University's First Graduate," *Auburn Alumnus*, March 1960.

¹²Coleman B. Ransone, Jr., *Alabama Government Manual*, (University, Alabama: Bureau of Public Administration, University of Alabama, 1977) 129.

¹³"Auburn University, Record of Applicant," Milo Howard file in the Library clipping files at the Archives.

¹⁴"Howard Receives Degree," *Montgomery Advertiser*, June 6, 1978.

¹⁵*Alabama Journal*, January 20, 1967.

¹⁶"Memoranda for Biographical Sketch."

On November 17, 1966, he became acting director due to the illness of Peter A. Brannon¹⁷ and on January 21, 1967 was appointed director.¹⁸ Some of his legal responsibilities were: to administer state archives, military records, noncurrent county records, and a historical library; to collect historical portraits and museums; to distribute state official reports; to prepare the *Alabama Official and Statistical Register*; to edit the *Alabama Historical Quarterly* and other historical publications, and to select and delineate historic sites for monumental purposes.¹⁹

One of his major achievements was the building of the east wing of the Archives Building. Thomas M. Owen, the first director, began the Archives and History operations in the cloak room of the Senate in the State Capitol. When the south wing of the Capitol was built, half of the basement and half of the top floor were given over for the Archives' location and were quickly overflowing with documents. From there the Archives collection moved to an old brick church and four residences on the block now occupied by the current building. These five buildings were soon bulging with historical documents,²⁰ and in the 1930's Marie Bankhead Owen secured federal funds to supplement state funds for a new building. According to legend, which may or may not be accurate, Mrs. Owen telephoned Harry Hopkins, head of the WPA, and bluntly demanded a new building. He said: "Madam, we can't just go around building buildings. We've got to have a reason." "Well," shot back Mrs. Owen, "My brothers are John Bankhead and Will Bankhead." To which Mr. Hopkins replied, "Those are two of the best reasons I ever heard."²¹ The new Alabama World War Memorial Building opened on National Flag Day, June 14, 1940. The original plans for the building included two wings which could be added when needed and when funds became available.²²

In addition to its museums and historical collections the

¹⁷*Alabama Journal*, January 20, 1967.

¹⁸*Alabama Journal*, October 23, 1967.

¹⁹1975 *Code of Alabama* § 41-6-8.

²⁰"Permanent Home for Department of Archives and History," *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, 2 (1940) 9.

²¹*Alabama Journal*, January 23, 1967.

²²"Permanent Home for Department of Archives and History," p. 10.

Archives also houses vast state files. The original building gave out of room and for many years the attic had to be used to store valuable unique materials simply because there was no space elsewhere. Estimates on the cost of the wing were \$2 million, however the Legislature appropriated only \$1 million. With no guarantee of another appropriation, Mr. Howard proceeded with the construction of the wing as far as possible with the budget available reasoning that the cost of construction would increase. When the funds were depleted the wing was a shell with no electricity, no heating, and no air conditioning. With the shell of the wing standing bleak and useless in sight of the Capitol, he requested the \$1 million necessary to complete the building, believing that completion of the wing could not be refused.²³ In 1973 Governor George C. Wallace intervened and the money was provided by revenue sharing funds. Finally completed, the wing alleviated the space problem but again as the state of Alabama grows older and history accumulates the perennial problem of where to file or store everything has resurfaced.

Under Mr. Howard's administration the Archives also enjoyed a period of substantial growth in its services. In the 1966-67 fiscal year there were 19 employees²⁴ and by the 1980-81 fiscal year the staff had grown to 47. He also began keeping the research rooms open on Saturdays to accomodate students and working people who could not use the resources of the Archives during regular working hours.²⁵

From 1964 through 1968 Mr. Howard was an instructor at the University of Alabama in Montgomery and beginning in 1968 was a research lecturer at Auburn University in Montgomery in addition to his other duties.²⁶

He was a member of Saint John's Episcopal Church and served as Vestryman 1963-1965, 1967-1969 and 1972-1974; clerk of the vestry 1963-1965, 1967-1969 and 1972-1974; Junior Warden 1968; Senior Warden 1969, and treasurer 1971. He

²³"'Shell' of New State Archives Wing is Nearly Completed," *Montgomery Advertiser*, January 20, 1972.

²⁴State of Alabama. *Budget General Fund and Trust Funds for the Fiscal Years Ending September 30, 1966 and September 30, 1967*, p. 65.

²⁵State of Alabama. *Executive Budget Fiscal Year 1980-1981*, p. 98-99.

²⁶Notes in the Milo Howard file in the Library clipping files in the Archives.

was Historiographer, Diocese of Alabama 1969-1975, an occasional Sunday school teacher in the Episcopal and Methodist churches, served in the Student Vestry at Saint Dunstan's Chapel in Auburn, and of the Advisory Committee of the Eighth Street Chapel (Episcopal) at Fort Meade, Maryland.²⁷

In 1967 he rang the bells at Saint John's in observance of All Saints Day, which was also the 82nd anniversary of the church bells which were dedicated and rung for the first time on All Saints Day in 1885.²⁸ In 1972 he gave a five minute concert on the bells which was part of a spiritual program open to the public.²⁹

In 1967 he received the Distinguished Service Award from the Montgomery Junior Chamber of Commerce³⁰ and in August of that year was voted one of the Four Outstanding Young Men of Alabama by the Alabama Jaycees and Liberty National Life Insurance Company.³¹ In 1968 he received the Distinguished Service Award from the Montgomery Junior Chamber of Commerce.³² In 1975 he was elected to the Alabama Academy of Honor. He has been listed in *Who's Who in America* since 1970 and has been listed in *Who's Who in Alabama* since 1969.

His charitable works included serving on the Board of Directors of the Woman's Home, a home for elderly women located within a block of the Archives building.³³

He was a member of numerous commissions, organizations, and associations: Alabama Academy of Science, Alabama American Revolution Bicentennial Commission 1975-1977, Alabama Archaeological Society board of directors, Alabama Art Commission, Alabama Committee for the Humanities and Public Policy 1973-1978, Alabama Division of the United Daughters of

²⁷From information in the Milo Howard file in the Library clipping files at the Archives.

²⁸"Bell Ringer," *Montgomery Advertiser*, November 2, 1967.

²⁹"Church Bells Concert Slated Here Friday," *Montgomery Advertiser*, February 3, 1972.

³⁰Information in the Milo Howard file in the clipping files at the Archives.

³¹"Three Montgomery Citizens Among Award Contestants," *Montgomery Advertiser*, August 19, 1967.

³²"Montgomery Jaycees Honor Two," *Montgomery Advertiser*, January 17, 1968.

³³"Southern Gentleman Was Born to Head State's Archives," *Birmingham News*, November 4, 1981.

the Confederacy Honorary Associate Member, Alabama Historical Association treasurer 1959-1964 and 1966-1981, vice president 1964-1965 and president 1965-1966, Alabama Historical Commission chairman 1967-1979, Alabama Library Association, Alabama Military Hall of Honor, Alabama Sesquicentennial Commission 1969, Alabama State Employees Association member of the board, Alabama Women's Hall of Fame, Auburn University Humanities Advisory Board chairman 1973-1976, English Speaking Union member of the board of the Montgomery Chapter, The Forum Club, Friends of the Montgomery Public Library, John L. Sanders Memorial Trust secretary-treasurer, Junior League of Montgomery advisor to the board of controls, Junior League of Montgomery honorary advisor to the Symphony Committee, Landmarks Foundation of Montgomery secretary, Montgomery Bachelor's Club, Montgomery Historic Development Commission, Montgomery Junior Chamber of Commerce secretary-treasurer 1960-1963, Montgomery Museum Association, Newcomen Society, Old South Historical Society, Rotary Club director, Society of American Archivists, Southern Historical Association, State Capitol Preservation Commission chairman, State Employees Consolidated Charity Drive Committee, State Historic Preservation Officer, Stonewall Jackson Memorial Board secretary, Theta Chi Fraternity secretary and vice president, The Thirteen, Tumbling Waters Museum of Flags steering committee, United Appeal Special Gifts Committee.³⁴

Landmarks Foundation of Montgomery was founded because of his concern over the destruction of the older part of Montgomery, specifically Maude Shaw's property which has three antebellum buildings. A city attorney suggested that he and James Loeb form a private foundation to supplement the work of the Alabama Historical Commission and the Ordeman-Shaw complex was preserved.³⁵

He was a prolific author having numerous articles published. His published books are: *A Brief History of St. John's Church*; he co-authored *The Memoire Justificatif of the Chevalier Montault de Monberaut*; *The Minutes, Journals and Acts of the General Assembly of British and West Florida*.

³⁴Information in the Milo Howard file in the Library clipping files at the Archives.

³⁵"Others Touched Their Lives," *Advertiser Journal*, December 27, 1981.

He was a popular speaker and spoke often to all types of organizations and groups from all over Alabama and the southeast.

An editorial in the *Montgomery Advertiser* of November 5, 1981 said: "By the time Milo Howard died of lung cancer Tuesday at the relatively young age of 48, he was for years recognized even by people who did not know him personally as an invaluable and perhaps irreplaceable institution in this city. He walked and talked with a fragile yet commanding gentility that cast a shadow of refinement and respectability over Capitol corridors long since shorn of whatever antebellum virtue there was among men that spawned the myth of universal chivalry."

Former Governor John Patterson reflected that Mr. Howard had the appearance, knowledge, commitment and personality to have been cast by Hollywood in the role of a typical architect. "Howard, tall, slim, neat and stately, was a familiar figure as he glided around the Capitol in his dark suits, immaculate white shirts and highly polished shoes."³⁶

Dr. Robert R. Rea, a professor of history at Auburn University and a friend of many years remarked:

"I first met Milo when he was an undergraduate student at Auburn, and I am quite sure that he introduced himself on that occasion as a Montgomerian. . . . Of its history, few could have been so knowledgeable. He could walk the streets of Montgomery and recreate their state, the buildings and businesses that lined them, at every stage of the city's development. And I often felt that he could populate them with the proper people at any period of their history . . .

"His appreciation of public education, his appreciation of what it should be, was reflected in his readiness to welcome other students as visitors to the State Archives. He might, indeed, groan a bit over the inevitable noise and nonsense, but he also smiled over their exposure to a broader culture, for he knew that some part of it would

³⁶*Birmingham News*, November 4, 1981.

rub off and benefit those future generations. I need not tell you that Milo worked hard and constantly to maintain, restore, and improve this city without any interest save that its beauty and its history should be known and cherished for the future . . .

"He was not a man to make a great noise about himself, his ambitions or his successes. He lived and worked quietly. . . . He was a man of proportion. Much of his life was spent in public service in which he provided leadership of the finest sort to organizations too numerous to be mentioned . . .

"Because he was a man who lived up to his own standards, he will be remembered as one who embodied precision, exactitude, a restrained formality — integrity in the fullest sense of the word."³⁷

He became ill in August, the upper left lobe of his lung was removed and even though he never recovered enough to return to his office he directed department business from his home. Robert Pinkston, a close friend, said that Mr. Howard had conducted department and personal business in the morning and that afternoon, while talking with a family member passed away quietly.³⁸

A park located in the Cloverdale section of Montgomery about one block from the house where he lived was dedicated to him in the spring of 1982. The triangular park contains a fountain, a flower garden and the memorial marker.³⁹

A magnolia tree and a memorial marker were placed in his honor on the southeast corner of the grounds of the Archives building.

Founded in 1901 this fully state supported archival department is the oldest in the nation. Milo B. Howard, Jr. was the fourth director in its history and had the privilege of serving under the second director, Marie Bankhead Owen, and the third

³⁷Remarks by Dr. Robert R. Rea at the Dedication of Howard Park, April 18, 1982.

³⁸*Birmingham News*, November 4, 1981.

³⁹"Memorial Park," *Montgomery Advertiser*, April 19, 1982.

director, Peter A. Brannon. With his ancestral ties to the land and his lengthy career with the Archives from 1952 as a college student to 1981 as director, he was almost born into the service of history and historical researchers.

THE CONFEDERATE CONSTITUTION: A LEGAL AND HISTORICAL EXAMINATION

By Roger D. Hardaway

The Constitution of the Confederate States, as the instrument of government, is the most certain and decisive expression of the views and principles of those who formed it, and is entitled to credence and acceptance as the most trustworthy and authoritative exposition of the principles and purposes of those who established the Confederate Government.

— Jabez Lamar Monroe Curry¹

On February 4, 1861, forty-three delegates from six Southern states — South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Georgia, Alabama, and Louisiana — met in convention at Montgomery, Alabama.² The delegates represented the states that had seceded from the United States, and their purpose was to form a new federal government for their nation. In the span of five weeks, the delegates chose a name for their country, wrote and adopted a provisional constitution,³ elected themselves Congressmen, selected and inaugurated a president and vice president, and wrote a permanent constitution⁴ which was

¹J.L.M. Curry, *The Southern States of the American Union Considered in their Relations to the Constitution of the United States and to the Resulting Union* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1894), p. 191.

²The work of the Montgomery convention is most thoroughly treated by Charles Robert Lee, Jr., in *The Confederate Constitutions* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1963), pp. 51-122. Lee profiles the delegates on pp. 21-50 and 153-58.

³The Provisional Confederate Constitution is reproduced in Lee, *The Confederate Constitutions*, pp. 159-70; Jefferson Davis, *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government*, I (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, [1881], pp. 640-48; and Alexander H. Stephens, *A Constitutional View of the Late War Between the States; its Causes, Character, Conduct and Results*, II (Philadelphia: National Publishing Co., 1870), pp. 714-22.

⁴The Permanent Confederate Constitution is reproduced in Emory M. Thomas, *The Confederate Nation, 1861-1865* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979), pp. 307-22, and Stephens, *A Constitutional View of the Late War Between the States*, II, pp. 722-35. In addition, the Permanent Confederate Constitution is printed beside the United States Constitution in parallel columns, with the differences between the two documents printed in italics, in Lee, *The Confederate Constitutions*, pp. 171-200; Davis, *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government*, I, pp. 648-75; and J.L.M. Curry, *Civil History of the Government of the Confederate States with Some Personal Reminiscences* (Richmond, Virginia: B.F. Johnson Publishing Co., 1901), pp. 274-309.

to take effect within one year of the inauguration of the president.⁵

Time was of the essence in the creation of the Confederate States of America. Stability had to be given to the Confederate government, as J.L.M. Curry, an Alabama delegate to the Montgomery convention, later said, "to prevent disorder and anarchy and secure [the] co-operation" of the governed.⁶ The leaders of the seceded states realized that they had to unite quickly as a new country so that together they could resist the effort of the United States government to coerce them into re-joining the Union.⁷ The adoption of a hastily written provisional constitution on February 8 created the new country and gave its government the measure of stability and unity necessary for continued existence.⁸

The provisional constitution stipulated that the delegates to the Montgomery convention would automatically become Congressmen of the new nation during the provisional period.⁹ The Congress thus created was a unicameral body with each state having one vote regardless of population.¹⁰ Furthermore, Congress would exercise the executive functions of the government, as well as the legislative, until a president could be elected and inaugurated.¹¹ On the morning of February 9, the delegates took the oath of office as Congressmen, and immediately elected by unanimous votes Jefferson Davis of Mississippi and Alexander H. Stephens of Georgia as provisional president and vice-president of the Confederate States of America.¹² They were to serve for one year or less, during which time a popular election would be held to choose their successors.¹³

⁵Provisional Confederate Constitution, Preamble.

⁶Curry, *The Southern States*, p. 191.

⁷E. Merton Coulter, *The Confederate States of America, 1861-1865* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1950), p. 23.

⁸Lee, *The Confederate Constitutions*, p. 72.

⁹Provisional Confederate Constitution, Article I, Section 1.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, Article I, Section 3, Clause 1; Lee, *The Confederate Constitutions*, p. 68; and William M. Robinson, Jr., "A New Deal in Constitutions," *Journal of Southern History*, Vol. IV, No. 4 (November 1938), p. 453.

¹¹Provisional Confederate Constitution, Article I, Section 5, Clause 3; and Article I, Section 6, Clause 19.

¹²Lee, *The Confederate Constitutions*, p. 78.

¹³Provisional Confederate Constitution, Article II, Section 1, Clause 1.

At the time of his election as provisional president, Davis was at Brierfield, his plantation near Vicksburg, Mississippi. Upon being informed of his election, he began a journey by train to Alabama.¹⁴ Because of the fact that no railroad tracks connected Mississippi to Montgomery, Davis was forced to take a circuitous route that took him through Memphis, Chattanooga, and Atlanta. Consequently, he did not arrive in Montgomery until Saturday, February 16.¹⁵ On Monday morning February 18, the president-elect rode in a parade through the streets of Montgomery to the site of his inauguration on the steps of Alabama's capital building. An estimated ten thousand Southerners witnessed the installation of their new president.¹⁶ Stephens, who was a delegate to the Montgomery convention, had celebrated his forty-ninth birthday by taking the oath of office as vice-president on February 11.¹⁷

Meanwhile, the delegates, acting in their capacity as Congressmen, appointed twelve of their colleagues to write a permanent constitution. Two people from each state served on the committee which was chaired by Robert Barnwell Rhett of South Carolina. The committee draft of the constitution was ready for debate on February 28.¹⁸ For two weeks, the members of the convention performed their Congressional duties in the mornings and reconvened as constitutional convention delegates in the afternoons to debate the provisions of the proposed constitution.¹⁹ Delegates from Texas, the seventh state to secede, arrived at Montgomery on February 27, and were allowed to participate in the debate on the permanent constitution although Texas was not admitted to the Confederacy until March 2.²⁰ The permanent constitution was unanimously approved by the delegates on March 11, 1861, and submitted to the states for their approval.²¹ Five states were required to ratify the constitution in order for it to be adopted.²²

¹⁴Davis, *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government*, I, pp. 230-31, and Thomas, *The Confederate Nation*, p. 60.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 61, and Coulter, *The Confederate States of America*, p. 26.

¹⁶Lee, *The Confederate Constitutions*, pp. 79-80, and Thomas, *The Confederate Nation*, pp. 61-62.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 60, and Lee, *The Confederate Constitutions*, p. 79.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 82-87, and Thomas, *The Confederate Nation*, pp. 62-63.

¹⁹Lee, *Confederate Constitutions*, p. 87.

²⁰*Ibid.*

²¹*Ibid.*, pp. 103, 123.

²²Permanent Confederate Constitution, Article VII, Section 1.

This was accomplished in less than three weeks, as Mississippi became the fifth state to ratify the constitution on March 29.²³

The permanent Confederate Constitution provided that upon its ratification by five states, Congress would set a time for the election and inauguration of the president, vice-president, and Congressmen.²⁴ The elections were held on November 6, 1861, and Davis and Stephens were re-elected without opposition.²⁵ In May, 1861, the capital of the Confederate States had been moved to Richmond, Virginia,²⁶ and Davis and Stephens were inaugurated for their second terms in that city on February 22, 1862.²⁷ By the terms of the provisional constitution, the inauguration was to have taken place no later than February 18, 1862; however, the inaugural ceremony was delayed until Washington's birthday as a symbolic gesture to signify the historical connection between the Confederate States and the United States.²⁸ On that date, February 22, 1862, the permanent Confederate Constitution went into effect.²⁹

The Confederate Constitution was closely patterned after that of the United States. As J.L.M. Curry later wrote: "The seceding States were not dissatisfied with the Constitution, but with its administration, and their avowed and manifest purpose was to restore its integrity and secure in the future its faithful observance."³⁰ In fact, several states were so intent upon embodying the basic framework of the United States Constitution into that of the Confederate States, that they sent their delegates to Montgomery with specific instructions not

²³Lee, *The Confederate Constitutions*, pp. 132-35. The other six states ratified the permanent constitution on the following dates: Alabama, March 12; Georgia, March 16; Louisiana, March 21; Texas, March 23; South Carolina, April 3; and Florida, April 22. The four states that seceded after the start of the Civil War ratified the permanent constitution on these dates: Arkansas, June 1; North Carolina, June 6; Virginia, June 19; and Tennessee, August 1.

²⁴Permanent Confederate Constitution, Article VII, Section 2.

²⁵Coulter, *The Confederate States of America*, pp. 103-104; Clement Eaton, *A History of the Southern Confederacy* (New York: MacMillan Co., 1954), p. 54; and Stephens, *A Constitutional View of the Late War Between the States*, II, pp. 483-84.

²⁶Arnold Whitridge, "Jefferson Davis and the Collapse of the Confederacy," *History Today*, Vol. XI, No. 2 (February 1961), p. 85.

²⁷Coulter, *The Confederate States of America*, pp. 103-104, and Eaton, *A History of the Southern Confederacy*, p. 54.

²⁸Roy F. Nichols, "The Operation of American Democracy, 1861-1865: Some Questions," *Journal of Southern History*, Vol. XXV, No. 1 (February 1959), pp. 31-52.

²⁹Stephens, *A Constitutional View of the Late War Between the States*, II, p. 483.

³⁰Curry, *Civil History of the Government of the Confederate States*, p. 69.

to deviate greatly from the provisions of the parent document.³¹

Several reasons why the Confederate Constitution should be modelled after the United States Constitution were evident to the Montgomery delegates. First, as indicated above, was the fact that Southerners admired the United States Constitution as a document — they were just unhappy with the interpretations given some of its sections by the United States Congress and the Supreme Court.³² As Alexander Stephens said, the aim of the Montgomery convention “was to sustain, uphold, and perpetuate the fundamental principles of the Constitution of the United States” as Southerners interpreted those principles.³³ By only modifying the United States Constitution, the Confederate States would be operating under a system of government with which they were familiar.³⁴ Furthermore, border states that were uncertain about whether or not to secede would know that the Confederate States government would not be very different from the one under which they had been functioning, and their fears of a radical Confederate government would be alleviated.³⁵ The same would be true of those Southerners who had opposed secession.³⁶ So using the United States Constitution as the foundation for the Confederate States government would act to unify the Southerners in support of their new nation. Moreover, the United States Constitution had been tested for seventy-two years and had worked well; the Southerners believed that with the correction of its few “defects,” it would be the best form of government they could

³¹*Ibid.*, p. 50; Curry, *The Southern States*, pp. 194-95; and Alexander H. Stephens, *Recollections of Alexander H. Stephens*, ed. by Myrta Lockett Avery (New York: Doubleday, Page and Co., 1910), pp. 171-72. All delegates to the Montgomery Convention, except those from Florida, were chosen at state secession conventions. Florida's governor appointed that state's three delegates. See Lee, *The Confederate Constitutions*, p. 22.

³²*Ibid.*, p. 89.

³³Stephens, *A Constitutional View of the Late War Between the States*, II, p. 339.

³⁴Whitridge, “Jefferson Davis and the Collapse of the Confederacy,” p. 80; E. A. Pollard, *Southern History of the War*, I (New York: Charles B. Richardson, 1866), p. 45; and Charles Henry Ambler, *Correspondence of Robert M. T. Hunter, 1826-1876* found in American Historical Association, *Annual Report*, 1916 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1918) 2:114 quoted in Jesse T. Carpenter, *The South as a Conscious Minority, 1789-1861: A Study in Political Thought* (New York: New York University Press, 1930).

³⁵John Witherspoon DuBose, *The Life and Times of William Lowndes Yancey: A History of Political Parties in the United States from 1834-1864; Especially as to the Origin of the Confederate States* (Birmingham, Alabama: Roberts & Son, 1892) 144 as quoted in Jesse T. Carpenter, *The South as a Conscious Minority*.

³⁶Thomas, *The Confederate Nation*, pp. 56-57.

devise.³⁷ Finally, time was still of the essence, and merely modifying the United States Constitution was the quickest and easiest way to organize the new government.³⁸

Of paramount importance to the Montgomery delegates was that the new constitution would embody the concepts of sovereignty and states' rights. Thus, in the preamble of the Confederate Constitution, it was stated that the people of the Confederate States were forming their government as "sovereign and independent" states. The delegates were creating a "permanent federal government" rather than a "more perfect Union."³⁹ This was done, Stephens said, "to put at rest forever the argument of the Centralists, drawn from the Preamble of the old Constitution, that it had been made by the people of all the States collectively, or in mass, and not by the States in their several Sovereign character."⁴⁰ And Curry noted that the preamble made it clear that the federal government of the Confederate States was the creation of the states and the only power it had was that given to it by them.⁴¹

Other sections of the Confederate Constitution echoed the theme of state superiority. Whereas the legislative power of the United States government was "granted" to Congress, the Confederate Constitution "delegated" that power to its Congress.⁴² The two words differ in meaning in that "to grant" means "to give," while "to delegate" means "to entrust."⁴³ Thus, the Southern states reserved the right to take back any power that they were allowing the Congress to exercise. In addition, states retained the power to impeach federal officers whose duties were "solely within the limits of any State." The impeachment was to be by a vote of two-thirds of both houses of the legislature of the particular state;⁴⁴ however, the trial of the impeached official was to be conducted by the Confederate Senate.⁴⁵

³⁷Curry, *Civil History of the Government of the Confederate States*, p. 63, and Carpenter, *The South as a Conscious Minority*, p. 222.

³⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 224-25

³⁹Permanent Confederate Constitution, Preamble.

⁴⁰Stephens, *A Constitutional View of the Late War Between the States*, II, p. 335.

⁴¹Curry, *The Southern States*, p. 195.

⁴²Permanent Confederate Constitution, Article I, Section 1.

⁴³*Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language* (Nashville: Southwestern Co., 1965), pp. 199, 326.

⁴⁴Permanent Confederate Constitution, Article I, Section 2, Clause 5.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, Article I, Section 3, Clause 6.

In 1861, the United States Constitution contained twelve amendments, and all were written into the body of the Confederate Constitution.⁴⁶ The ninth and tenth amendments, dealing with rights reserved to the states, were modified to stress the point that the people of the individual states rather than the people generally were retaining those rights.⁴⁷ Under the Confederate Constitution, a state's sovereignty could not be invaded by the institution of a lawsuit against it by a citizen of another state.⁴⁸ Furthermore, Confederate states could enact duties on sea-going vessels to raise revenue to improve their rivers and harbors without obtaining the consent of Congress. Nor was Congress' consent necessary for two or more states to enter into agreements concerning navigation of rivers that traversed those states.⁴⁹ Neither of these last two rights had been given to the states under the United States Constitution.⁵⁰

The second major concern of the Montgomery delegates was that the Confederate Constitution would insure the rights of Southerners to own slaves. Consequently, several sections of the constitution guaranteed the protection of slave property. Southerners could travel to any state in the Confederacy with their slaves without fear that their right of property in them would be impaired.⁵¹ That is, if a free state should later join the Confederacy — and that possibility was left open⁵² — slaves would not become free by travelling or escaping to that state.⁵³ If the Confederate States acquired new territories that were not yet states, slavery would exist in those territories.⁵⁴ Furthermore, Congress was prohibited from enacting any laws to deny or impair the right of Southerners to own slaves.⁵⁵

The Confederate States, however, agreed with the United States that the foreign slave trade should end. Consequently,

⁴⁶Coulter, *The Confederate States of America*, p. 28.

⁴⁷Permanent Confederate Constitution, Article VI, Sections 5 and 6; and Carpenter, *The South as a Conscious Minority*, p. 229.

⁴⁸Permanent Confederate Constitution, Article III, Section 2, Clause 1.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, Article I, Section 10, Clause 3.

⁵⁰Carpenter, *The South as a Conscious Minority*, p. 244.

⁵¹Permanent Confederate Constitution, Article IV, Section 2, Clause 1.

⁵²See Thomas, *The Confederate Nation*, pp. 64-65.

⁵³Permanent Confederate Constitution, Article IV, Section 2, Clause 3.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, Article IV, Section 3, Clause 3.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, Article I, Section 9, Clause 4.

the Confederate Constitution prohibited the importation of slaves from any country except the United States.⁵⁶ Additionally, Congress was given the power to put an end to that slave trading if it desired.⁵⁷ This was the result of a compromise between those delegates who wanted to stop all slave trading and those who did not want to curtail it at all.⁵⁸

The Confederate Constitution was a monument to fiscal responsibility in government. It created many safeguards to protect the taxpayers' money, and, if anything, it put too many restrictions on the spending of public funds. According to Curry, "the Confederate States dreaded the abuse of the taxing power,"⁵⁹ and the Confederate Constitution certainly reflected that attitude. For one thing, Congress could collect only that amount of money necessary to pay the country's debts, provide for its defense, and "carry on the Government of the Confederate States."⁶⁰ The clause in the United States Constitution allowing tax money to be collected to provide for the "general welfare" was specifically excluded from the Confederate Constitution because the delegates were of the opinion that it had been greatly abused by the United States Congress in the past.⁶¹ Congress could enact no protective tariffs which would "foster or promote any branch of industry."⁶² However, Congress did have the right to tax exports by a vote of two-thirds of both houses. This was a taxing power which the United States Congress did not have.⁶³

Many sections of the Confederate Constitution curtailed the power of the federal government to spend public funds. Unless money was requested by the president or was needed to pay the expenses of the government, Congress could not appropriate it except by a vote of two-thirds of both houses.⁶⁴ Any contract entered into by the government of the Confederate States was to specify the exact amount of the appropriation, and this amount could not be increased by the payment

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, Article I, Section 9, Clause 1.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, Article I, Section 9, Clause 2.

⁵⁸Carpenter, *The South as a Conscious Minority*, p. 250.

⁵⁹Curry, *The Southern States*, p. 201.

⁶⁰Permanent Confederate Constitution, Article I, Section 8, Clause 1.

⁶¹Curry, *Civil History of the Government of the Confederate States*, p. 83.

⁶²Permanent Confederate Constitution, Article I, Section 8, Clause 1.

⁶³*Ibid.*, Article I, Section 9, Clause 6.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, Article I, Section 9, Clause 9.

of extra compensation to a contractor, officer, agent or servant.⁶⁵ Stephens said that this practice under the United States government had led to a great waste of public money.⁶⁶ Congress could not appropriate money for bounties out of the federal treasury.⁶⁷ Furthermore, Congress was prohibited from appropriating any money for internal improvements except to aid navigation, and the money so appropriated was to be collected from those who benefitted by the improvements, presumably to be returned to the federal treasury.⁶⁸ No money could be appropriated to build roads for the benefit of the post office department, which was a reversal of the policy of the United States government.⁶⁹

Several other clauses of the Confederate Constitution were also designed to curtail the useless spending of public money. Every law passed by Congress was to relate to only one subject which was to be stated in the title.⁷⁰ The purpose of this clause was to prevent riders from being added to appropriations bills,⁷¹ a practice used by the United States Congress to fund pet projects or "pork barrel" measures. Another clause relating to the same custom gave the president the power of item veto. Instead of either accepting or rejecting an appropriations bill in its entirety as the President of the United States must do, the Confederate president could accept parts of the bill and reject the remainder.⁷² A final safeguard to the federal coffers required the post office department to become self-supporting by March 1, 1863.⁷³ This clause had as one of its objects the reduction of the use of free mailing privileges by Congressmen and other governmental officials.⁷⁴

The Congress created by the permanent Confederate Constitution, unlike the first Confederate Congress, was a bicameral one. Congressmen and Senators had to meet the same age requirements as their counterparts in the United States,

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, Article I, Section 9, Clause 10.

⁶⁶Stephens, *A Constitutional View of the Late War Between the States*, II, p. 337.

⁶⁷Permanent Confederate Constitution, Article I, Section 8, Clause 1.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, Article I, Section 8, Clause 3.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, Article I, Section 8, Clause 7.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, Article I, Section 9, Clause 20.

⁷¹Carpenter, *The South as a Conscious Minority*, p. 255.

⁷²Permanent Confederate Constitution, Article I, Section 7, Clause 2.

⁷³*Ibid.*, Article I, Section 8, Clause 7.

⁷⁴Curry, *Civil History of the Government of the Confederate States*, p. 88.

twenty-five and thirty years, respectively.⁷⁵ Members of the House of Representatives were to be apportioned according to population, one representative for every fifty thousand people. Three-fifths of the slaves in a Congressional district were to be counted for purposes of apportioning representatives, a provision carried over from the United States Constitution.⁷⁶ Each state, regardless of population, was to be allotted two senators.⁷⁷ Senators were to be elected by state legislatures, as United States Senators were elected; however, the Confederate Constitution provided that senators would be elected in the regular term of the state legislature immediately preceding their terms of service.⁷⁸ Thus, the legislators who would be electing senators would themselves be newly elected, and the senators so chosen would reflect, presumably, the will of the people. In all state and federal elections in the Confederate States, only citizens of the country could vote;⁷⁹ some states in the United States allowed aliens to vote.⁸⁰ A unique innovation written into the Confederate Constitution allowed Congress to enact legislation permitting Cabinet members to be seated in either House of Congress and to debate legislation pertaining to their departments.⁸¹ However, Congress did not enact such a law during the short life of the Confederacy.⁸²

The President of the Confederate States was to be chosen, after a popular election, by an electoral college similar to the one in use in the United States.⁸³ Most of the delegates at the Montgomery convention realized the shortcomings of the electoral college, and many other proposals for the election of the president were presented. However, no consensus could be reached on any alternative suggestion, so the electoral college was reluctantly retained.⁸⁴ The Confederate president

⁷⁵Permanent Confederate Constitution, Article II, Section 1, Clause 2, and Article I, Section 3, Clause 3.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, Article I, Section 2, Clause 3.

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, Article I, Section 3, Clause 1.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, Article I, Section 2, Clause 1.

⁸⁰Coulter, *The Confederate States of America*, p. 29, and Robinson, "A New Deal in Constitutions," p. 454.

⁸¹Permanent Confederate Constitution, Article I, Section 6, Clause 2.

⁸²Davis, *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government*, I, pp. 259-60, and Eaton, *A History of the Southern Confederacy*, p. 30.

⁸³Permanent Confederate Constitution, Article II, Section 1, Clauses 2, 3, 4, and 5.

⁸⁴Curry, *Civil History of the Government of the Confederate States*, pp. 70-74, and Robinson, "A New Deal in Constitutions," p. 457.

was required to be thirty-five years old and a citizen of the states constituting the Confederacy for fourteen years.⁸⁵ The president and vice-president were to be chosen for six-year terms rather than for four years, and the president could only serve one term.⁸⁶ The original draft of the United States Constitution had limited the president to one six-year term,⁸⁷ and the Montgomery delegates believed that such an arrangement would reduce greatly the tendency of the president to use his power for purely political reasons.⁸⁸ Another provision of the constitution was also designed to take politics out of the presidency. The president was not allowed to remove from office employees of the executive department, except ambassadors and Cabinet members, without cause; and he was required to state his reasons for removing an employee in writing to the Confederate Senate.⁸⁹ Finally, if a presidential appointee was rejected by the Confederate Senate, that person could not be re-appointed to the same office during the Senate's recess.⁹⁰

The judicial article of the Confederate Constitution allowed for the establishment of the Supreme Court.⁹¹ However, the Confederate Congress never saw fit to create such a court, although proposals pertaining to it were occasionally debated in Congress.⁹² The Southerners had grown to dislike the United States Supreme Court intensely, and a fear of appellate jurisdiction over state court decisions was the main reason no Confederate Supreme Court was ever established.⁹³ Moreover, the pressing business of the war prevented the need for a Supreme Court from becoming urgent.⁹⁴ Consequently, ultimate judicial power was in the state supreme courts throughout the life of the Confederacy.⁹⁵ Federal district courts were created by the

⁸⁵Permanent Confederate Constitution, Article II, Section 1, Clause 7.

⁸⁶*Ibid.*, Article II, Section 1, Clause 1.

⁸⁷Davis, *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government*, I, p. 259.

⁸⁸Curry, *The Southern States*, p. 196, and Carpenter, *The South as a Conscious Minority*, pp. 256-57.

⁸⁹Permanent Confederate Constitution, Article II, Section 2, Clause 3.

⁹⁰*Ibid.*, Article II, Section 2, Clause 4.

⁹¹*Ibid.*, Article III, Section 1, Clause 1.

⁹²Thomas, *The Confederate Nation*, pp. 194-95.

⁹³J.G. de Roulhac Hamilton, "The State Courts and the Confederate Constitution," *Journal of Southern History*, Vol. IV, No. 4 (November 1938), pp. 427-30.

⁹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 430, and Eaton, *A History of the Southern Confederacy*, pp. 58-59.

⁹⁵Thomas, *The Confederate Nation*, p. 195, and Hamilton, "The State Courts and the Confederate Constitution," pp. 433-34.

Confederate Congress, but they had no power to review state court decisions.⁹⁶ District courts were also restricted in their jurisdiction in that citizens of different states could not sue each other in federal courts but were left to seek relief in state courts.⁹⁷

The Confederate Constitution also differed from the United States Constitution in other ways. In the preamble of the Confederate Constitution, the Southerners asked the "favor and guidance" of God in their governmental endeavors.⁹⁸ The Confederate Congress could pass no bankruptcy law which would extinguish a debt contracted prior to the passage of the law.⁹⁹ The Confederate Constitution required that new states could be admitted only by a vote of two-thirds of both Houses of Congress, the representatives voting individually and the senators voting by states.¹⁰⁰ This was done in order to insure that a significant number of states would agree before a free state was admitted to the Confederacy.¹⁰¹ Under the United States Constitution, amendments could be proposed by a vote of two-thirds of both Houses of Congress or by two-thirds of the state legislatures. Amendments so proposed were to be ratified by three-fourths of the states in order to become part of the constitution. Amendments to the Confederate Constitution could be proposed by the vote of conventions in only three states, and the Confederate Congress was prohibited from offering constitutional amendments. Amendments would become part of the constitution upon being ratified by two-thirds of the states.¹⁰² So the Confederate Constitution was easier to amend than the United States Constitution, although Confederate amendments could originate only in the states.¹⁰³

Two controversial issues which the Confederate Constitution did not address were those of the right of Confederate

⁹⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 425, 433.

⁹⁷Permanent Confederate Constitution, Article III, Section 2, Clause 1, and Stephens, *A Constitutional View of the Late War Between the States*, II, p. 337.

⁹⁸Permanent Confederate Constitution, Preamble.

⁹⁹*Ibid.*, Article I, Section 8, Clause 4.

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*, Article IV, Section 3, Clause 1.

¹⁰¹Thomas, *The Confederate Nation*, p. 65.

¹⁰²Permanent Confederate Constitution, Article V.

¹⁰³Nevertheless, the Permanent Confederate Constitution was never amended; one minor amendment, concerning federal district courts, was added to the provisional constitution.

states to secede and to nullify federal laws.¹⁰⁴ The delegates to the Montgomery convention decided that it was best to disregard those issues until such time as it became absolutely necessary to deal with them.¹⁰⁵ However, the right of a state to secede from a confederacy to which it no longer wished to belong could hardly be denied by the government of the Confederate States of America. The emphasis put upon state sovereignty in the Confederate Constitution would seem to imply a right to secede, and President Davis believed that states could not be coerced into remaining in the Confederacy because of the fact that secession was not expressly prohibited.¹⁰⁶

The defeat of the Confederate States of America in the Civil War causes any judgments concerning the effectiveness of the Confederate Constitution to be mere speculation. The Confederacy never faced a constitutional crisis which would have tested the durability of its constitution. However, a few observations can be made concerning the strengths and weaknesses of the document as the foundation of a nation's government. The legislative branch of the federal government was extremely limited in what it could do, and its ability to spend the public money was probably restricted too much. The reluctance of the Confederate Congress to pass tax bills to finance the South's war effort probably contributed to the loss of the war and of the nation.¹⁰⁷ The judicial branch of the federal government was terribly weak during the existence of the Confederacy, but measures to correct this deficiency would have no doubt been forthcoming had the Confederate States won the war. The presidency, however, was a powerful position, and the executive branch was easily the most powerful of the three federal branches. Although the president was restricted in his ability to remove employees in his department, he was at liberty to dismiss his major appointees without cause. He was also free from having to play politics in order to maintain his position as president, being assured of six years in office and forever barred from seeking the position again. Most important, however, was his control over budgetary matters with the right of item veto over appropriations bills.

¹⁰⁴Thomas, *The Confederate Nation*, p. 63.

¹⁰⁵Carpenter, *The South as a Conscious Minority*, pp. 232-33.

¹⁰⁶Coulter, *The Confederate States of America*, pp. 29-30.

The Confederate Constitution perhaps put too much power into the hands of the states, and whether a nation of sovereign states loosely bound together in a confederacy could survive would have been the true test of the Confederate Constitution. It is open to question whether or not the Confederate Constitution improved upon its predecessor in the United States. But one thing can be said with assurance concerning the Confederate Constitution: It was what the Southern people wanted, and, as J.L.M. Curry said, it secured the rights of the Southern states and guarded the principles of government and life which the South held most dear.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷Thomas, *The Confederate Nation*, pp. 137-38, 197-99.

¹⁰⁸See Curry, *Civil History of the Government of the Confederate States*, p. 64.

ALABAMA'S RECONSTRUCTION REPRESENTATIVES IN THE U. S. CONGRESS, 1868-1878: A PROFILE

by

Thomas J. Davis

Five men entered the United States House of Representatives on Tuesday, July 21, 1868, as members from Alabama. A sixth man entered on the next day to complete the state's delegation, and two other men from the state were soon seated as members of the United States Senate. Not since she had withdrawn her men in the process of formally separating herself following her act of secession from the Union on Friday, January 11, 1861, had Alabama been represented in the U.S. Congress. Now, after seven-and-a-half years, the Cotton State again had full representation in the national legislature.¹

¹U.S. Congress, House, An Act to Admit the States of North Carolina, South Carolina, Louisiana, Georgia, Alabama and Florida to Representation in Congress. H.R. 1058, 40th Cong., 2nd sess., 25 June 1868. *Congressional Globe*, vol. 40, pt. V, appendix, p. 510. The act passed over President Andrew Johnson's veto. Ibid, pt. IV, 3466, 4459, 4465-66. Alabama's U.S. Senators, George E. Spencer and Willard Warner, were seated on July 25, 1868. Also, see U.S., Congress, *Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1971* (Washington, D.C., 1971), 188. On withdrawal of congressmen, see *ibid*, 171, 175; Alabama's U.S. Senators Benjamin Fitzpatrick and Clement C. Clay Jr. announced their intention to withdraw on January 21, 1861; six representatives did the same on that date. The last Alabama representative, Williamson R.W. Cobb, presented a signed communication declaring his intention and withdrew on January 30, 1861. That was in the second session of the Thirty-sixth Congress. For a description of the state's course to secession, see Walter L. Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama* (New York, 1905), ch. 2, "Secession from the Union," which draws heavily from William R. Smith's "History and Debates of the Convention of Alabama" (1861). Smith was a cooperationist leader in the convention, and his history and debates represent his notes of the proceedings. Also, see Clarence P. Denham, *The Secession Movement In Alabama*, (Montgomery, 1933); and William H. Brantley Jr., "Alabama Secedes" *Alabama Review* 7 (1954): 165-185. Also see standard dictionaries such as *The New International Dictionary of the English Language*, 2nd ed. (1959); and *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (1973).

For the historical charges against carpetbaggers see Walter L. Fleming, ed., *Documentary History of Reconstruction, Political, Military, Social, Religious, Educational and Industrial: 1865 to the Present Time*, 2 vols. (Cleveland, 1907), esp. ch. 8, "Carpetbag and Negro Rule," and II: 33-36. On the dark view of Reconstruction generally, see John W. Burgess, *Reconstruction and Constitution 1866-1876* (New York, 1902); William A. Dunning, *Essays on Civil War and Reconstruction and Related Topics*, Rev. ed. (New York, 1904) and his *Reconstruction Political and Economic, 1865-1877* (New York, 1907); Walter L. Fleming, *Sequel to Appomattox* (New York, 1919); and E. Merton Coulter, *The South dur-*

Not all Alabamians rejoiced, however. Indeed, the seating of the men provoked harsh words within the Cotton State although nearly everybody agreed that readmission to representation marked a significant step for Alabama in the process of Reconstruction. Not even the dissenters argued against the fact that readmission signalled the regaining of a share in the fundamental power in the federal republic — the power to elect the nation's lawmakers. That was not what generated the discord. It was dissent about the character of the men the Cotton State had sent to Congress that caused contention.²

The dissidents accused the men seated in Alabama's name at the nation's capitol of not being truly representative of the state's people. In fact, the complaints alleged that the men were unfit for office. They claimed the men were Yankee Johnny-come-latelys or southern turncoats; in either case, the dissidents asserted, the men were inexperienced in politics and ignorant of Alabama's interests. Largely on the basis of personal background then, the dissidents impeached the integrity of not only the first group of Reconstruction congressmen, but also of others who followed them.³

To express their scorn for many of the men, the dissidents labeled them carpetbaggers and scalawags. And the labels stuck. They became part of the old, dark description of Reconstruction as a time when irresponsible and unprincipled men took advantage of the unsettled conditions after the Civil War by promoting their own selfish interests in southern politics. They became generalizations used for convenience to describe the class of men who held immediate post-bellum political office in the Cotton State.⁴

ing *Reconstruction, 1865-1877* (Baton Rouge, 1947). On Alabama particularly, see Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*; and John W. Dubose, *Alabama's Tragic Decade: Ten Years of Alabama, 1865-1874* (Birmingham, 1940).

On the pervasiveness of the dark view, see Thomas B. Bailes Jr., "Historical Interpretation of the Reconstruction Era in United States History as Reflected in Southern State Required Secondary School Level Textbooks of State History" (Ph.D. dissertation, Univ. of New Mexico, 1967); Mark M. Krug, "On Rewriting the Story of Reconstruction in the U.S. History Textbooks" *Journal of Negro History* 46 (1961): 133-153.

²For reaction to initial congressmen, see *Montgomery Daily Mail*, July 25, 1868; and Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 737-38.

³For reaction to later congressmen during the period, see Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 749-50, 754, 761.

Revisionists in recent years have peeled back parts of the general labels in examining the substance of Reconstruction. For example, Alabama historian Sarah Woolfolk Wiggins in her prize-winning book, *The Scalawag in Alabama Politics, 1865-1881*, and her other work has matched the traditional labels against historical truths about Reconstruction politicians at the state level. Her conclusions have shown that the labels distorted the character of many of the Cotton State's local politicians. The background of the state's U.S. senators also has been studied. But there has been no comparable review of congressmen, and so a simple question has remained unanswered: What, in fact, was the character of Alabama's Reconstruction representatives in Congress?⁵

⁵For the historical definition and origin of the terms carpetbagger and scalawag (scallywag), see Mitford M. Mathews, ed., *A Dictionary of Americanisms on Historical Principles*, 2 vols. (Chicago, 1951), 273, 1465; the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1973) I: 228; II: 1894-95.

⁶Sarah Woolfolk Wiggins, *The Scalawag in Alabama Politics, 1865-1881* (University, Ala., 1977); her "The Role of the Scalawag in Alabama Reconstruction" (Ph.D. dissertation, Louisiana State Univ., 1965); her "Carpetbaggers in Alabama: Tradition versus Truth" *Alabama Review* 15 (1962): 133-144. For revisionists see, Richard N. Current, "Carpetbaggers Reconsidered," in David H. Pinkney and Theodore Ropp, eds., *A Festschrift for Frederick B. Artz* (Durham, 1964), 139-157. Also see leading works such as John Hope Franklin, *Reconstruction After the Civil War* (Chicago, 1961); Kenneth M. Stampp, *The Era of Reconstruction, 1865-1877* (New York, 1965); and Stampp and Leon F. Litwack, eds., *Reconstruction: An Anthology of Revisionist Writings* (Baton Rouge, 1969).

On historiograph, see Alrutheus A. Taylor, "Historians of the Reconstruction" *Journal of Negro History* 23 (1938): 16-34; Francis B. Simkins, "New Viewpoints of Southern Reconstruction" *Journal of Southern History* 5 (1939): 49-61; Howard K. Beale, "On Rewriting Reconstruction History" *American Historical Review* 45 (1940): 807-827; T. Harry Williams, "An Analysis of Some Reconstruction Attitudes" *Journal of Southern History* 12 (1946): 469-486. Bernard A. Weisberger, "The Dark and Bloody Ground of Reconstruction Historiography" *Journal of Southern History* 25 (1959): 427-447; Armstead L. Robinson, "Beyond the Realm of Social Consensus: New Meanings of Reconstruction for American History" *Journal of American History* 68 (1981): 276-297.

On U.S. Senators, see C.M. Thompson, "Carpetbaggers in the United States Senate" in *Studies in Southern History and Politics* (1920); and R. Earl McClen- don, "Status of Ex-Confederate States as seen in Readmission of Senators" *American Historical Review* 41 (1936): 703. All three of Alabama's U.S. Senators during the period were born in the North. George E. Spencer, who served from July 25, 1868, to March 3, 1879, was born in New York during 1836; he attended Montreal College and moved to Iowa in 1856 where he practiced law and held public office before joining the Union army during the Civil War; he moved to Alabama in 1865. Willard Warner, who served from July 25, 1868, to March 3, 1871, was born in Ohio during 1826 and graduated from Marietta College in 1845; he served in the Ohio state senate and served in the Union army before moving to Alabama in 1867. George T. Goldthwaite, the only Democrat among the three, was born in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1809; he attended the United States Military Academy at West Point; he moved to Alabama in 1826 where he studied and prac-

The question can be answered by comparing the facts of the congressmen's personal background against the characteristics implied by the carpetbagger and scalawag labels. For instance, the carpetbagger label was used to suggest a man was born in the North and had come to Alabama only after the Civil War. The scalawag label was used to suggest a man had been born in the South but had switched his sectional and political allegiance by becoming a Republican politician after the war. Both labels intimated that the men lacked suitable education or previous experience as political officeholders.⁶

The items of interest in profiling the men then were their place of birth, place of principal residence before 1861 when the Civil War began, place of residence in 1861, military service during the war as an aspect of sectional allegiance, political party affiliation, education, profession, and officeholding prior to election to Congress. (Table 1 displays Alabama's congressmen by name and indicates their selected characteristics, including the Congressional districts they served and the number of Congresses they served in.)

The profile produced by comparing the congressmen's backgrounds also provides a view of parallel features and relative differences among the men over time. For example, changes in background from congress to congress, from district to district, and from party to party became noticeable. The last point, in comparing the congressmen's background along the lines of party affiliation, offers perspective on the partisan origins of the carpetbagger and scalawag labels. Also, making the comparison over the period from 1868 to 1878 allowed a match of men elected both before and after what historians of Reconstruction have often called, "the re-establishment of conservative government," which occurred in Alabama on November 16, 1874. The ten years then encompassing the Fortieth through the Forty-fourth Congress provided a balanced context for the background comparison.⁷

ticed law, becoming a judge; during the Civil War he served as adjutant general of Alabama. See Wiggins, *Scalawag in Alabama*, appendix, "Republican Nominations and Appointments, Alabama, 1868-1881."

⁶On use of a comparative method, see Current, "Carpetbaggers Reconsidered," 139-157, and his *Three Carpetbag Governors* (Baton Rouge, 1967).

⁷Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, ch. 24, "The Overthrow of Reconstruction," esp. 782-800; Dubose, *Alabama's Tragic Decade*, ch. 5; Richard

DAVIS--Alabama's Reconstruction Representatives

3A

TABLE I

Alabama's Representatives in the U.S. House, 1868-1878, by Name, Congress Served in, Congressional District Served, Place of Birth, Year of Birth, Place of Principal Residence Prior to 1861, Place of Residence in 1861, Year Residence began in Alabama, Political Party Affiliation, Military Service during American Civil War, Attendance at College, Practice of Law, Officeholding Prior to election as Representative.

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII
1. Kellogg, Francis M.	40		1	Mass.	1810	Mich.	Ohio	1866	R	y-u	n	y-e
2. Buckley, Charles M.	40, 41, 42		2	N.Y.	1835	Ill.		1865	R	y-u	n	n
3. Norris, Benjamin W.	40		3	Me.	1819	Me.		1865	R	y-u	y	n
4. Pierce, Charles W.	40		4	N.Y.	1823	Ohio		1865	D	y-u	n	y-e
5. Callis, John B.	40		5	N.C.	1828	Wis.		1865	R	y-u	n	n
6. Haughey, Thomas	40		6	*	1826	Ala.		1841	R	y-u	y	y-e
7. Buck, Alfred E.	41		1	Me.	1832	Me.		1866	R	y-u	y	y-e-a
8. Herlin, Robert S.	41		3	Ga.	1815	Ga.		1844	R	n	y	y-e-a
9. Hays, Charles	41, 42, 43, 44		4	Ala.	1834	Ala.		1834	R	y-c	y	y-e-a
10. Doo, Peter M.	41, 42		5	N.Y.	1813	N.Y.		1856	D	n	y	y-e-a
11. Sherrod, William C.	41		6	Ala.	1835	Ala.		1835	D	y-c	y	y-e-a
12. Turner, Benjamin S.	42		1	N.C.	1825	Ala.		1830	R	n	n	y-e
13. Handley, William A.	42		3	Ga.	1834	Ala.		1840?	D	y-c	n	n
14. Sloss, Joseph H.	42, 43		6	Ala.	1826	Ala.		1826	CD	y-c	n	y-e
15. Bromberg, Frederick G.	43		1	N.Y.	1837	Ala.		1838	LR	n	y	y-a
16. Rapier, James T.	43		2	Ala.	1837	Ala.		1837/65	R	n	n	y-e
17. Pelham, Charles	43		3	N.C.	1835	Ala.		1838	R	y-c	y	y-a
18. Caldwell, John H.	43, 44		5	Ala.	1826	Ala.		1826	R	y-c	y	y-e
19. White, Alexander	43		A	Tenn.	1816	Ala.		1827	R	n	y	y
20. Sheats, Charles C.	43		A	Ala.	1839	Ala.		1839	R	n	y	y-e-a
21. Haralson, Jeremiah M.	44		1	Ga.	1846	Ga.		1867	R	n	y	y-e
22. Williams, Jeremiah M.	44		2	Ala.	1829	Ala.		1829	D	y-c	y	y-e
23. Bradford, Taul	44		3	Ala.	1835	Ala.		1835	D	y-c	y	y-e
24. Hewitt, Goldsmith H.	44		6	Ala.	1834	Ala.		1834	D	y-c	y	y-e
25. Forney, William H.	44		A	N.C.	1823	Ala.		1840	D	y-c	y	n
26. Lewis, Burnell B.	44		A	Ala.	1838	Ala.		1838	D	y-c	y	y-e-a

SOURCE: Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1971 (Washington, D.C., 1971).

NOTES: The column headings indicate as follows: I is name of representative; II is Congress served in; III is Congressional district served; IV is place of birth and the initials in the column are standard abbreviations used by the U.S. Postal Service and the "Indictment; Scotland: V is year of birth; VI is place of principal residence prior to 1861; VII is year residence began in Alabama; VIII is political party affiliation where CD is Conservative Democratic, D is Democrat, LR is Liberal Republican, R is Republican; IX is military service during the American Civil War; y means yes, served in armed forces during the war; n means did not serve; U means served in Union forces; C means served in Confederate forces; XI attended college; y means yes, attended college; n means no, did not attend college; XII is practiced law; y means yes, practiced; n means no, did not practice; XIII is held office prior to election to Congress; y means yes, held office; n means no, did not hold office; e means office held was elective; a means office held was appointive.

The volatile nature of politics within the Cotton State during the period was demonstrated vividly by the significant turnover that occurred in the Congressional delegation. All but five of the total of twenty-six men Alabama sent to the U.S. House from July, 1868, until March 3, 1878, served only a single term. Fierce contention raged then, and men literally lost their life struggling to get and hold a Congressional seat.⁸

So getting a seat, however difficult, proved to be easier than holding on to it. Four of every five (80.0%) of the incumbent representatives during the period failed to keep his seat for a second term. Re-election was, thus, an uncommon feat. A few men in the state's six regular Congressional districts endured, however. The champion survivor was Charles Hays who won four successive terms in the Fourth district. Charles W. Buckley served the Second district three times. Three men served their district twice: Peter M. Dox and John H. Caldwell, each in the Fifth district, and Joseph H. Sloss in the Sixth district. The men who sat in the state's two representative-at-large seats added in 1873 on the basis of reapportionment following *The Ninth Census of the United States* taken in 1870 found it impossible to stay seated: not one of the four during the period succeeded in winning re-election.⁹ (See columns I-III in Table 1.)

Chasing a seat on such a quickly changing course led the candidates who ran for Congress in Alabama to seek any edge on their opponents. The two major political parties in the state — the long established Democrats and the recently arrived Republicans — vied for advantage against each other. So did factions within the parties and individuals, too. They all raced to win however they could, and the competition pro-

Hofstadter, William Miller and Daniel Aaron, *The United States: The History of a Republic*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1967), 466; Edward C. Williamson, "Alabama Election of 1874" *Alabama Review* 17 (1964): 210.

*Representative Thomas Haughey, for example, was murdered in 1869 while campaigning for re-election to Congress from Alabama's Sixth Congressional District. See *Montgomery Advertiser*, August 8, 1869; and Wiggins, *Scalawag in Alabama*, 57.

"On reapportionment, see U.S., Congress, House, *The Decennial Population Census and Congressional Apportionment*, H. Rept. 1314, 91st Cong., 2nd sess., 1970; U.S. Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Census of Population: 1970* (Washington, D.C., 1973), I: viii, U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970*, 2 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1975) 2: 1084-85, "Apportionment of Membership in House of Representatives, by States, From Adoption of Constitution to 1970."

duced complaints early and often.¹⁰

Particularly the losers complained; winners seldom found fault with the results. In the elections that sent the first Reconstruction representatives in Congress in 1868, Republican candidates won five of the six seats. So the Democrats lost big, and they complained bitterly. Attacking the character of the winning Republicans, the Democrats launched their carpet-bagger-scalawag charges.¹¹

The background of all six men seated in 1868 strongly supported complaints that they were not long-term Alabamians. Not one of the men was a native of the Cotton State. Four of the six — Rev. Charles W. Buckley, Francis W. Kellogg, Benjamin W. Norris and Charles W. Pierce — were, in fact, northern-born. They had lived most of their life in the North and had come to Alabama only at the end of the Civil War. The other two representatives — Dr. Thomas Haughey and John B. Callis — had divergent origins. Haughey had immigrated to Alabama from Scotland in 1841 as a fifteen-year-old and had lived in the state since then. Callis, on the other hand, was an itinerant; born in North Carolina, he had lived for a time in Tennessee, Wisconsin, Minnesota, California, Central America and in Wisconsin again, all before his twenty-sixth birthday. He came to the Cotton State as a thirty-seven-year-old in 1865. So, except for Dr. Haughey, the men Alabama sent as its first Reconstruction representatives were reasonably suspect as outsiders and, at least on the basis of birthplace, appeared to fit the stereotype of carpetbaggers and scalawags; yet the men hardly had time to make any lasting impression since by entering the House as they did in July, 1868, they served less than half-a-term before the Fortieth Congress ended on March 3, 1869. (See columns IV, V, VIII in Table 1.)

The state's six representatives in the Forty-first Congress had more of an Alabama background. Indeed, from this point on, native Alabamians increased in the delegation and northern-born men decreased. Rev. Buckley, born in New York

¹⁰For succinct summary of intra-party conflict and inter-party contentions, see Wiggins, *Scalawag in Alabama*; and on background, see Thomas B. Alexander, "The Basis of Alabama's Ante-Bellum Two Party System" *Alabama Review* 19 (1966): 243.

¹¹On contested elections and complaints, see Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 737, 750, 754, 793 and 796.

State, stayed on for this and another term. Another New York born man, Peter M. Dox, also served in this Congress, as did Maine born Alfred E. Buck. But Dox had moved to Alabama in 1856, before the war, unlike Buckley and Buck who both had come in 1866. Robert S. Heflin who was born in Georgia, but moved west to neighboring Alabama in 1844 as a nineteen-year-old, served in this Congress. Adding the home-grown flavor here were two native Alabamians, Charles Hays and William C. Sherrod.

Hays stayed in his seat for the Forty-second Congress. In fact, he continued to sit until the end of the Forty-fourth Congress. He was joined in his second term by an Alabama-born freshman representative, Joseph H. Sloss. So, again, the state's delegation included two native-born sons. Two northern-born men, Buckley and Dox, continued to sit from the previous Congress. The other two representatives were William A. Handley and Benjamin S. Turner, both of whom were southern-born and had lived in the Cotton State for most of their lives.

The number of Alabama-born men rose sharply in the delegation with the election in 1873 of the Forty-third Congress. Five natives sat there: Hays and Sloss returned to their seats and were joined by John H. Caldwell, James T. Rapier and Charles C. Sheats. There were three other representatives because this was the Congress where the Cotton State's seats increased from six to eight. Charles Pelham and Alexander White, two of the remaining three men then, were southern-born. Only Frederick Bromberg, another New York State native, was northern-born. Yet Bromberg had come to the Cotton State in 1838 as a year-old infant. So, like the other seven men, he had spent most of his life in Alabama. All the men except Rapier lived in the state at the start of the war. Rapier, an Alabama born black man, had left for freedom "north of slavery," to use a phrase of the black abolitionist Frederick Douglas, who reckoned that place to be wholly outside the United States; and that was where Rapier was when the war began — in Canada. At the war's end he returned to his birth-place to serve, however, in Reconstruction with its promise of freedom at home. Thus, the Cotton State's delegation in this Congress harbored not a single man who showed even the

slightest sign of being a stranger.¹²

Native Alabamians clearly were in the ascendent then, and in the Forty-fourth Congress they increased their number among the state's representatives by holding six of the eight seats. Hays and Caldwell returned and were joined by four native-born freshmen: Taul Bradford, Goldsmith W. Hewitt, Burwell B. Lewis and Jeremiah H. Williams. The other two representatives—William H. Forney and Jeremiah Haralson—were both southern-born. Forney had lived in the state since 1840. Haralson had spent most of his life as a slave in neighboring Georgia, however, and had come to the Cotton State in the wake of the war. He alone was an outsider then. Not a single northern-born man served the state in this Congress.

No horde of strangers had swarmed in then to steal Alabama's seats in the U.S. House during Reconstruction. Of the twenty-six representatives, ten (38.5%) were native-born sons of the state. Eight others (30.8%) were born elsewhere in the South. Only seven (26.9%) were northern-born. One (3.8%) was born outside the United States. For the most part, even the men not born in Alabama were no strangers to the state when they were elected to Congress: nine (56.3%) of the sixteen non-natives lived in the state before the war. So they were hardly Johnny-come-latelys, but the remaining seven men were; four

¹²On Rapier, see Loren Schweninger, "A Fugitive Negro in the Promised Land: James Rapier in Canada, 1856-1864" *Ontario History* 67 (1975): 91-104; Schweninger, "John H. Rapier, Sr.: A Slave and Freedman in the Ante-Bellum South" *Civil War History* 20 (1974): 23-34; Ira Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South* (New York, 1974), 356, 387.

On black presence in Alabama's Reconstruction politics, see Peter Kolchin, *First Freedom: The Responses of Alabama's Blacks to Emancipation and Reconstruction* (Westport, Conn., 1972); Henry E. Cobb, "Negroes in Alabama during the Reconstruction Period, 1865-1875" (Ed.D. dissertation, Temple Univ., 1952).

The U.S. census of 1870 showed Alabama with a total of 202,046 "male citizens 21 and upward." The total is not broken down by race, however the total in the category "21 and upward—male" (203,315) indicated that 105,474 were whites and 97,823 were blacks (the remaining 18 were Indians). See Bureau of the Census, *Ninth Census of the United States, 1870: Population*, 1:619. The voter registration figures taken in 1868 showed 74,450 whites and 90,340 blacks. See *Report of Major General [George G.] Meade, March 3, 1868*. House Executive Documents, no. 238, 40th Congress, 2nd sess. Also, note remarks on "Registration and Disfranchisement" in Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 488-495, and 493-494, 747, 750, 755, 795, for maps of the elections of 1870, 1872, 1874, and 1876. For registration of voters under Reconstruction Acts of 1867, see Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, 493-94.

of them had come to Alabama in 1865 and the other three arrived in 1866. Five of these seven latecomers served in the state's first Reconstruction delegation. Only one of the five lasted more than a year in his seat, however. They clearly had not taken over the state's representation.

The attack against the men on the grounds of geographic origins came from partisan sources, and it had only one direction. The Democrats used the latecomer and outsider charges to assail the Cotton State's growing Republican Party. In the early years of Reconstruction, the plight that pushed the Democrats to their tactics was apparent: Republicans dominated Alabama's representation. (See column IX in Table 1.)

The Republicans sat solidly early. Five of the first six representatives were Republicans. In the next delegation they held four of the six seats. In the following Congress they fell to three. In the Forty-third Congress, four of the eight representatives were regular Republicans and another was a Liberal Republican. In the Forty-fourth Congress elected the year after the state re-established what southern traditionalists called "conservative" government in 1874, the seats swung sharply in the opposite direction: only two Republicans sat and Democrats held the other six seats.

Of the total thirty-four seats the state had during the Fortieth through the Forty-fourth Congress, the Republicans held eighteen—slightly more (52.9%) than half. Two offshoot parties took three seats (8.8%): the Conservative Democrats got two and Joseph H. Sloss and the Liberal Republicans got one with Frederick G. Bromberg. The regular Democratic Party won thirteen seats, a bit more than a third (38.2%) of the total. So the Democrats were likely to lament since they were largely losers until the late Reconstruction Congress when they controlled the state's delegation.¹³

¹³On the Liberal Republicans, see Earle D. Ross, *The Liberal Republican Movement* (New York, 1919); Matthew T. Downey, "Horace Greeley and the Politicians: The Liberal Republican Convention in 1872" *Journal of American History* 53 (1967): 727; William Gillette, "Election of 1872" in Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. and Fred L. Israel, eds., *History of American Presidential Elections 1789-1978* (New York, 1971), 4:137; James M. McPherson, "Grant or Greeley? The Abolitionist Dilemma in the Election of 1872" *American Historical Review* 71 (1965): 43-61; Patrick W. Riddleberger, "The Break in the Republican Ranks: Liberals vs. Stalwarts in the election of 1872" *Journal of Negro History* 44 (1959):

The Democrats' charges that the Republican representatives were latecomers and outsiders was self-serving and not completely accurate, for they drew on a blind-eyed partisan perspective. The Democrat Charles W. Pierce was a New Yorker by birth and came to Alabama only after the war; moreover he had served in the Union army, yet his fellow Democrats did not accuse him of being a carpetbagger. Nor did they impugn the Democrat Peter M. Dox, who was also born in New York and had moved to Alabama as a forty-three-year-old in 1856. Immigrating to the Cotton State and becoming its representative during Reconstruction was not the sole prerogative of any one party then.

Nevertheless, it was true that the Democrats were more clearly the party of native white men. Six of the ten Democratic representatives were native Alabamians. Sloss, the Conservative Democrat, also was born in Alabama. Of the fourteen Republican representatives, only three (21.4%)—Hays, Rapier and Sheats—were born in Alabama. (See columns IV and IX in Table 1.)

Even so, by-and-large, the Republican representatives were settled Alabamians. The Scot-born Dr. Haughey, for example, had lived in the Cotton State since 1841. Except for the wandering Callis and the enslaved Haralson, the six Republicans born in the South outside of Alabama had lived in the state when the war broke out. Indeed, they had spent most of their lives in the state. Heflin was the latest of the men to arrive in Alabama and he had come in 1844; he was also the oldest when he arrived at the age of twenty-nine. The others had come at the ages of three, five and nine years. While they were not native sons then, they were certainly children of the Cotton State. (See columns IV-IX in Table 1.)

Only the remaining four Republican representatives—Buck, Buckley, Kellogg and Norris—were northern-born latecomers to Alabama. Except for Buckley, though, they each served only a

136-57. On Conservative Democrats, see William B. Hesseltine, *Confederate Leaders in the New South* (New York, 1950). Also, see Frederick E. Haynes, *Third Party Movements since the Civil War* (New York, 1916); Howard P. Nash Jr., *Third Parties in American Politics* (New York, 1966); George H. Mayer, *The Republican Party, 1854-1966*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1967); and Ralph M. Goldman, *The Democratic Party in American Politics* (New York, 1966).

single term. Together the four men totaled six terms of service: three half-terms in their short Fortieth Congress, two terms in the Forty-first and one in the Forty-second. They accounted then for about a sixth (17.6%) of Alabama's Reconstruction seats in the House.

Yet even these four failed to fit neatly into the carpet-bagger stereotype. All of them had, for example, come to the Cotton State before Congress passed the Reconstruction Acts of March, 1867. Contemporary Democrats and historians following the traditional dark time interpretation of the era claimed those acts seduced strangers into swarming into the South to seek political office. But Buck, who appeared as the latest-comer among the four, had moved into Alabama from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in the summer of 1866. The Reverend Buckley had come around January, 1866, as superintendent of education of the Freedmen's Bureau. Kellogg, who had served as a representative from Michigan in the Thirty-sixth, Thirty-seventh and Thirty-eighth Congress, had come between April and July of 1866 as collector of internal revenue for the southern district of Alabama. Norris came in May, 1865, as a Freedmen's Bureau agent. Norris and Buckley's jobs with the bureau and Kellogg's post as a federal tax collector created little sympathy for them among ex-confederate supporters. Nor did their work help their reputations within that circle. Yet the men had hardly swarmed into Alabama suddenly to seize political office. All four had lived and worked in the state for at least two years before entering Congress.¹⁴

The scurrilous carpetbagger charge launched by Democrats lacked substance to stick against the actual background of the four northern-born Republican representatives then, and the scalawag charge against most of the other ten Republican representatives was equally baseless. Although it was true that, except for the Scot-born Haughey, all the men were southern-born, they were not turncoats. The three black Republicans—Haralson, Rapier and Turner—certainly turned their back on no

¹⁴For information on congressmen who served in the Freedmen's Bureau, I am grateful to my former colleague, the late John A. Carpenter, for generously sharing his research with me. Also Carpenter, *Sword and Olive Branch: Oliver Otis Howard* (Pittsburgh, 1964). Note that John B. Callis was the Freedmen's Bureau sub-assistant commissioner in Huntsville. Also, see Elizabeth Bethel, "The Freedmen's Bureau in Alabama" *Journal of Southern History* 14 (1948): 49-92.

political heritage of theirs by joining the Republican Party. Tennessee-born Alexander White was no turncoat either: an old Union Whig, he had run against the Democrats before the Civil War to be elected to the Thirty-second Congress. Alabama-born Charles C. Sheats was also a pre-war foe of the Democrats. Indeed, he had objected to secession and spent the years from 1862 to 1865 in a Confederate jail on a count of treason although he was never brought to trial on the charge. He switched no sides by becoming a Republican. Neither did Dr. Haughey: he had served as a surgeon in the First Alabama Cavalry, U.S.A., to fight the Confederacy along with 2,677 other white Alabamians mostly from the state's northern region. Rather than being turncoats then, these men followed the same politics they had before the war: they opposed the Democrats.¹⁵

On the whole, in fact, what the men did during the war helped to explain their allegiance. Eighteen (69.2%) of Alabama's twenty-six Reconstruction representatives were Civil War veterans: eleven (42.3%) fought for the Confederacy and seven (26.9%) for the Union. All the men who wore gray were southern-born; indeed, eight of the eleven were born in Alabama. Not all of them became Democrats, however. Charles Hays and Charles Pelham became Republicans. On the Union side, Charles Pierce turned in his blues after coming south with the war and served as a Democrat. The veterans did not line up then simply as gray native Democrats and blue northern Republicans. Hays, Pelham and Pierce broke the neat ranks. (See columns IV, IX and X in Table 1.)

The non-veterans clustered for the most part on the Republican side. None of the three black men who became Cotton State congressmen during Reconstruction soldiered in either

¹⁵See William S. Hoole, *Alabama Tories: The First Alabama Cavalry, U.S.A., 1862-1865* (Tuscaloosa, 1960), 14. Haughey later was found on the roster of the Third Regiment, Tennessee Volunteer Infantry. On the origins of opponents to Democrats, see Thomas B. Alexander, "Persistent Whiggery in Alabama and the Lower South, 1860-1867" *Alabama Review* 12 (1959): 35-52, and "Persistent Whiggery in the Confederate South, 1860-1877" *Journal of Southern History* 27 (1961): 305-29; Allen W. Trelease, "Who were the Scalawags?" *Journal of Southern History* 29 (1963): 445-468; also see rebuttal to Trelease by David Donald, *ibid*, 30 (1964): 253-257; Woolfolk [Wiggins], "The Role of the Scalawag in Alabama Reconstruction," also deals with origins. Also see Hugh C. Bailey, "Disloyalty in Early Confederate Alabama" *Journal of Southern History* 23 (1957): 522-528.

army. After the war they, of course, became Republicans. Three other non-veterans were also Republicans; they were Alabama-born Sheats and southern-born Heflin and White. The Liberal Republican Bromberg was also a non-veteran. Although born in the North, he lived in Alabama from the time he was one-year-old until he returned north to study chemistry at Harvard before the war; he was there in Cambridge, Massachusetts, when the war started and he stayed to tutor mathematics until the fighting was finished. The last of the non-veterans was the Democrat Peter Dox. Like Bromberg, Dox was born in New York; he had come to Alabama in 1856, and when the war came in 1861 he sat it out. Six of the eight (75.0% non-veterans then were Republicans; one (12.55%) was a liberal Republican, and one was a Democrat.

Neither geographic origin nor sectional allegiance shown by Civil War service exactly coincided with party allegiance then. The Democratic Reconstruction representatives showed the most homogeneity, however: nine of the ten were Civil War veterans; Dox was the only non-veteran, and Pierce was the only veteran who had served the Union. The other eight Democrats had served the Confederacy. Six of the eight were native sons of Alabama; the other two — Handley and Forney — were born respectively in Georgia and North Carolina. The Conservative Democrat Sloss was an Alabama-born Confederate veteran.

The Republicans were a more mixed group; eight of the fourteen (57.1%) were Civil War veterans; six (42.8%) had served the Union and two (14.3%) the Confederacy. All six Republican non-veterans were southern-born men. Two of the three black representatives who had not fought were slaves during the war; the other had been in Canada. Another of the Republican non-veterans had spent the war in a Confederate prison. The two others — White and Heflin — were forty-five and forty-six years old, respectively, when the war started; their age hardly prevented them from taking up arms, but neither did it push them to the front of the lines.

The general picture that emerged then showed the Democrats overwhelmingly as sons of the South who had soldiered for her cause; but the Republicans were scattered in the pic-

ture: the four northern-born men had fought for the Union; North Carolina-born Callis, who had been raised for the most part in Wisconsin, fought for the Union, too. The only two Republicans who fought for the Confederacy were the North Carolina-born Pelham and the Alabama-born Hays.

As sons of the South who had supported her cause in battle but then become representatives as Republicans, Pelham and Hays suffered many a cry against their character. Democratic opponents charged both men with being turncoats. Before the twenty-six-year-old Pelham went to war in 1861, he had declared no party allegiance. So whether he changed persuasions was not clear. At first glance, however, Hays did appear to have changed sides. Before the war he had been a Democrat. In fact, he had served as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention at Baltimore, Maryland, in 1860. So he had switched parties when he became a Republican. Yet his switch was not so sharp a change as it first appeared. He had been a Douglas-Democrat, not a hard-line Breckenridge secessionist. Under the title Southern Democrats, however, the secessionists carried the Cotton State in the 1860 election; so Hays had been out of step with the ruling Democrats in his state even before the war. His shift to the Republican Party after the war simply followed the break that had occurred in 1860. He had not turned his back on his political principles. Moreover, he evidently satisfied his constituents of his sincerity, for they elected him to four successive terms in the House.¹⁶

Hays' success no doubt irked the Democrats and intensified their assaults against his character. Yet like most of his colleagues who served the Cotton State as congressmen during Reconstruction, he appeared solid in character and qualified for his seat. The background of the men showed them, in fact, to be relatively well educated and politically experienced before their election to Congress. Fifteen of the twenty-six (57.7%), for example, had attended college; fourteen (53.8%) were law-

¹⁶See *Biographical Directory of the American Congress*, s.v., "Hays, Charles"; and *Historical Statistics*, 1075-76, "Electoral Vote Cast for the Presidency, by State and Political Party: 1804 to 1968." The Southern Democrats polled 54.4 per cent of Alabama's popular vote for the Presidency in 1860; the regular Democrats polled 15.5 per cent and the Constitutional Unionists polled 31.1 per cent. The Republicans got virtually no votes. *Ibid*, 1080.

yers, and twenty-two (84.6%) had held government office prior to their election to Congress. (See columns XI-XIII in Table 1.)

In education and experience, no significant difference emerged between Democats and Republicans. Among all Alabama's Reconstruction representatives, only Georgia-born Democrat William A. Handley had not gone to college or practiced law or held government office before his election to Congress. Overall, though, the Democrats scored high in the three categories — slightly higher than the Republicans, in fact. Seven of the Democrats had each attended college, practiced law and held government office prior to their election to Congress. Only two Republicans had done that. As a group then, the Democrats held an edge.

Examined category-by-category, however, the differences by party appeared slight. Eight of the ten Democrats had, for example, attended college; so had eight of the Republicans. But there were fourteen Republicans, so the Democrats had a proportional edge (80.0% vs. 57.1%). Two of the Republicans had been slaves until the end of the war and were, thus, effectively barred from college. Withdrawing them from the comparison reduced the edge (to 80.0% vs. 66.7%). The Democrats numbered seven lawyers; the Republicans had six (70.0% vs. 50.0%). Nine Democrats and eight Republicans had held office prior to their election to Congress (90.0% to 57.1%). The proportions in each category favored the Democrats, but the whole numbers were about even.

The Democrats' edge was too small to be statistically significant, yet it provided them with a basis to say their men were generally more educated and experienced than the Republicans. Their men were also slightly older when they were first elected to Congress, averaging 44.5 years of age compared to 42.0 years for the Republicans. By party the representatives then looked much the same.

The native Alabamians stood out, however, as a sub-group among the men. Of the ten representatives born in the Cotton State, seven attended college, eight practiced law and all ten held public office prior to their election to Congress. Also, they were significantly younger than the other men, averaging 40.5 years of age at their election. The northern-born men

were the oldest sub-group, averaging 44.8 years of age; among the seven of them, five (71.4%) attended college, two (28.6%) practiced law, and six (85.7%) held office before their first election to Congress from Alabama. The men born in the South outside of Alabama averaged 44.1 years of age when elected; two (25.0%) of the eight attended college — that increased to two of six (33.3%) if the two enslaved blacks are excluded — four (50.0%) practiced law, and five (62.5%) held prior public office. So the sons of Alabama led in each category.

The cast of the state's Congressional delegation improved then according to education and legal and political experience as more native Alabamians were elected. In terms of education for example, more of the representatives in the Forty-fourth Congress had attended college than those in the Fortieth Congress. The progression was not a straight line, though. Four of the six (66.7%) representatives in the Fortieth Congress had attended college. All six in the Forty-first had, however. In the Forty-second and Forty-third Congress only half of the men had attended college. In the Forty-fourth Congress seven of the eight (87.5%) had attended college. The number of lawyers increased at the same time: the Fortieth Congress had one (16.7%), the Forty-first and Forty-second had two each (33.3%), and the Forty-third and Forty-fourth Congress each had six (75.0%). The experience of prior officeholding increased in much the same way: it went from two (33.3%) in the Fortieth Congress, to four (66.7%) in the Forty-first and Forty-second, to six (75.0%) in the Forty-third, to all eight (100%) in the Forty-fourth Congress.

Alabama's Reconstruction representatives had changed over time then. Men born and bred in the North had served in the beginning of the period, and their education and experience were generally less than that of the men who followed them to the U.S. House. Yet these men failed to fit the stereotype of carpetbaggers, at least as the Democrats had cast the charge. Two of the northern-born representatives were themselves Democrats. And as for dominating the delegation, the northern-born men were in the majority only once: in their brief service during the Fortieth Congress.

The most dominant group among the representatives was

the native Alabamians. No others matched them as a group in education and experience or in terms of service: the sons of Alabama held fifteen (44.1%) of the thirty-four U.S. House seats their state had during the period. Six of the ten natives were Democrats; one was a Conservative Democrat, and three were Republicans. That meant 60.0 per cent of the Democrats were native sons while only 21.4 per cent of the Republicans were. The Democrats tried to turn that fact into political profit.

Re-employing their pre-war pattern, the Democrats portrayed themselves as the party of the South. They praised their native sons while pillorying those who had joined the Republicans; and preying on sectional animosity and parochialism, they condemned the character of the Yankee-born Republicans and of the Republicans born in the South outside of Alabama. They were simply serving their own interests, however, for they launched no complaints against their own two Yankee-born Democrats and their own two representatives born in the South outside the Cotton State.¹⁷

The carpetbag-scalawag charge emerged from the bias of partisan politics then, and for the most part blamed men simply for being Republicans. Clearly it said little or nothing about the quality of the actual character of the men who served Alabama in the U.S. House of Representatives in the Fortieth through the Forty-fourth Congress. In profile all twenty-six men appeared reasonably qualified by their background for office.

¹⁷On pre-war Democratic strategy, see Lewy Dorman, *Party Politics in Alabama from 1850 through 1860*, Alabama State Department of Archives and History, Historical and Patriotic Series No. 13 (Wetumpka, Ala., 1935); William J. Cooper Jr., *The South and the Politics of Slavery, 1828-1856* (Baton Rouge, 1978), esp. ch. 8, "Parties in Crisis" and ch. 9, "Victory and Defeat." Alexander, "The Basis of Alabama's Ante-Bellum Two Party System," 243.

"MY RELATIVES ARE LEAVING ME VERY FAST":
WAR TIME LETTERS OF JAMES WRIGHT TO HIS
NEPHEW

Edited by

George L. Mahoney

James Wright of Oswichee Bend, Russell County, Alabama, was the third largest slave holder and the third largest cotton producer in the state in 1860.¹ He was born January 21, 1799, in Somers, Westchester County, New York, the youngest surviving child of Micajah and Ruth Wright.² Both his parents died in 1811 when he was twelve, leaving James and his four older brothers and sisters.³

From what is known of his early life, James went South, possibly in the late 1820's, accompanying his brother Charles with a travelling circus.⁴ James became a founder and Director (1833), then President (1838) of the Merchants' Bank of South Carolina at Cheraw, a position he held until 1855.⁵ He also owned a cotton plantation "Balfour" near the Pee Dee

¹Joseph K. Menn, *The Large Slaveholders of the Deep South, 1860 Part I*. (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms, 1969), pp. 495-496.

²Somers was then known as Stephentown, but changed to Somers in 1808 to honor the naval hero, Captain Richard Somers, killed in the Tripolitan War in 1803. For further discussion of this see Thomas Scharf's *History of Westchester County*, Vol. II (Philadelphia: L.E. Preston & Co., 1886), Chapt. 7, written by Charles E. Culver.

³They were, in the order of their births: Rachel Wright (1789-1862), Daniel Wright (1790-1864), Charles Wright (1792-1862), Elizabeth Wright (1794-1863).

⁴Stuart Thayer, *Annals of the American Circus 1793-1829* (Manchester, Michigan: Rymack Printing Co., 1976), pp. 209-210. Thayer, using the "Charleston Courier," January 18 to March 1, 1828, has Charles Wright managing a menagerie preparatory to a trip northwards. Because of James Wright's close contact with Charles in the years to come and because he was the younger brother, this seems likely. His two sisters were married and his other brother Daniel had gone west to Ohio. A son of Daniel, James E. Wright (another nephew), was to spend some recuperative time with his uncle on his Alabama plantation after graduating from Princeton.

⁵W.A. Clark, *The History of the Banking Institutions Organized in South Carolina prior to 1860* (Columbia, South Carolina: The State Company, 1922), pp. 103-105; 203-204. I am indebted to Allen H. Stokes, Manuscripts Division of the University of South Carolina, for these references and also for copies of letters of (a) James Wright dated 1828, which may place him here at that time.

⁶Letters and Papers of James Wright. Somers Historical Society, Somers, N.Y. (Hereafter Wright Papers).

River.⁶

His brother Charles returned to and remained in Westchester County, New York, where he also engaged in farming and banking. In 1828 Charles married Elizabeth Smith (1802-1888). The couple had ten children, one girl and nine boys.

James Wright never married, but did have an illegitimate son, James M. Wright, born about 1841 in Pennsylvania.⁷ In 1850 James Wright moved to a newly purchased plantation in Alabama on an influx of the Chattahoochee River, not far from Columbus, Georgia. By the end of the decade James Wright was a farmer-planter-businessman with sizeable interests in land, slaves, banking and ships.⁸

Most of James Wright's family remained in Somers, New York and New York State. Three of his brother Charles' sons went South to be with their uncle. They assisted him in managing his plantations and hoped to chart careers for themselves. The first nephew, George (1830-1853), helped his uncle make the move to Alabama, but due to poor health returned to Somers where he died. The second nephew, Charles Jr. (1836-1862), followed in 1853 and the third nephew, James Jr. (1833-1899), in 1861. When the Civil War began, James Wright, his two nephews, and illegitimate son were all together in Alabama.

James Wright supported secession and the Confederacy. He thought the South would win the war and wrote determinedly and belligerently about "never crossing Mason and Dixon's Line again" and "fighting from the Potomac to the Gulf of Mexico." His relations in Somers, New York, were

⁷U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Eighth Census of the United States: 1860*. Russell County, Alabama: Schedules 1, 2 & 4. Taken July 7 and 17th, 1860 by James R. Giddens, Asst. Marshall, P.O. Vellula. Manuscript Census on microfilm lists James M. Wright, age 19, state of birth, Pennsylvania. Hereafter, references to 1860 Census taken from this source.

⁸In 1858 James Wright, in partnership with J. Eli Gregg of South Carolina, bought over 5,000 acres of land in Sunflower and Bolivar Co., Mississippi in order to open another plantation farther west.

With James W. Phillips, another nephew, he owned portions of ships and speculated in cotton. By 1860 James Wright was a cotton producer involved in all phases of the trade. He maintained business and financial interests in Cheraw, South Carolina; Somers, New York; New York City and Liverpool, England.

staunch Democrats, opposed to Lincoln's Administration, and interested in the "Society for the Diffusion of Political Knowledge."⁹ None served on the Union side.

The two nephews, Charles Jr. and James Jr., three years older than Charles, enlisted in Captain Brooks' Company, Georgia Light Artillery (Terrell Light Artillery), Georgia Volunteers and served with the Confederacy.¹⁰

Charles Jr. was an officer (1st Lieutenant), a popular, romantic figure with his horse and man-servant, stating, "I am ready to join the standard of my adopted state to fight for an honorable separation and fair distribution of property and territory."¹¹

He was in the army by September of 1861, saw service in Virginia and then on October 3, 1862, died of "consumption of the brain" near Savannah, Georgia, at the age of 26.¹²

James Jr. was a private. He enlisted on May 15, 1862. He received a bounty of \$50.00 and was for a period of time detailed as a steward in the company hospital. He survived the war.¹³

It is selected letters from his uncle James Wright to James Jr. from 1862 to 1864 that are presented here.¹⁴ All were sent from Oswichee (via Columbus, Georgia) to the Terrell Artillery, stationed at Savannah, Georgia. Through the correspondence of these transplanted Northerners we share in a seg-

⁹The "Society for the Diffusion of Political Knowledge" was organized at Delmonico's Restaurant in New York City by Democrats on February 6, 1863. "A propaganda agency . . . Supported by millionaires, the Society published and diffused pamphlets attacking emancipation and abrogation of civil liberties and upholding states rights." For more on this see James A. Rawley, *The Politics of Union* (Illinois: The Dryden Press, 1974), p. 123.

¹⁰Georgia Department of Archives and History, Atlanta, Georgia (Civil War Records Section) and Wright Papers, Somers, New York.

¹¹Letter of Charles Wright Jr., March 3, 1861, to his brother James, Wright Papers, Somers, New York.

¹²Georgia Department of Archives and History, Atlanta, Georgia (Civil War Records Section) and Wright Papers, Somers, New York.

¹³*ibid.*

¹⁴The designation "Jr." is used because, although he was not a junior in a father and son relationship, the designation is used by the Uncle in his letters to James, perhaps to distinguish his nephew from his natural son.

ment of the war-time life of the deep South and their own personal relationship. We grasp something of their attitudes toward the homeland and the homestead.

The Wright Papers (manuscript collection of letters) are kept in the archives of the Somers Town Historian. These archives are located in the Town House (Elephant Hotel), Somers, New York 10589. The entire collection is part of the Carolyn Wright Reis Estate, property of the Town of Somers, administered by the Reis Trustees through the agency of the Somers Historical Society.

James Wright to James Wright Jr.

Oswichee, Alabama
June 14, 1862

Dear Nephew,

I am in receipt of yours of the 25th. It is a good rule to adopt the endeavour to excel in all things that you undertake—And I would advise you to endeavor to do so as an artilleryist. It will commend you much to your officers, and add also to your position among the men—to those who excel the non commissioned offices are of course given, and very properly.—Take care as much as possible of your health,—Charles can give you good advice on that score.—¹⁵

We have not had a rain for about three weeks,—yet the corn generally looks very well the oldest is beginning to show the tassels—

We had to plow up all of Sunflower, and a part of the nice fruit about two weeks since,—the stand having been destroyed by the workers—

The health of our own people continues good,—Dr. Whittaker told me a few days since that there was a good of measles and dysentery in the neighborhood.—

¹⁵Health was always a concern and a topic. In earlier letters to Charles Jr. the uncle had often warned him, "not to expose himself to the midday sun and the night air."

Tell Charles that Capt. Lewis has been at Mrs. Rose's for two or three weeks, and leaves in the morning to join his regiment—I hear that Col. Cantry has written his wife a glowing account of the victory of Stonewall Jackson & the large amount of property captured.¹⁶

Yours truly,
J. Wright

December 16, 1862

Dear Nephew,

In your letter to James since ten or twelve days you stated there was plenty of game near your new camp and also good fishing,—I have no ammunition to send you—the waggon has just left here for Columbus, after more to be distributed tomorrow.¹⁷

In it I have sent a box marked to your address which I think I shall send by Express. If so I will pay the charges on it.—

It contains half a dozen rolls of sausages, some hogshead cheese, a jar of butter, and wrapped in a small brown paper you will find a dozen fish hooks and a line long enough to make three [sic] and then the box was filled with spindlers [sic].

I hope it may reach you safely and in good time—

To get the sausage out of the box you rip one end, and turn it over and cut off in slices—

We killed about twenty hogs two weeks ago and as it is now turning cold it is possible we may kill again tomorrow. We have gathered the crop and it turns out very poorly.

¹⁶Campaign of Stonewall Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley when McClellan was threatening Richmond.

¹⁷James M. Wright, illegitimate son of James Wright.

Capt. Dawson¹⁸ was down last Sunday but I did not see him he will be here in a few days again—

The health of our people is very good.

I hope you are prepared to give the Yankees a hot reception when they call on you—

Yours truly,
J. Wright

(over)

Joe says that some of the men owed him money, and that it was to be paid to you. If you receive any I will pay it to him.

J. W.

P. J. Wright

Yours of 15th just now received. It was not necessary to sell your gata [sic]. If you had let me know your wants I would have remitted you money.

I go to Columbus in the morning and will enclose in this one hundred dollars for you—

February 1, 1863

Dear Nephew,

Your letter of the 28th came duly to hand,—We have a large proportion of our corn land broken up,—Have sown about 150 acres of oats and have fifty more to sow, the orchard has been attended to,—we expect to give it a coat of ashes and some

¹⁸Edgar Gilmer Dawson (1830-1883), organized and equipped the battery of light artillery named after his father-in-law William Terrell (1778-1855), in which both Charles Jr. and James Jr. served. Dawson had practiced law but planted extensively in southwestern Georgia. William Terrell had been a wealthy physician who had donated \$20,000 to establish a chair of agriculture at what was to become the University of Georgia. Dawson had married Terrell's only daughter Lucy (1833-1910). Taken from Robert M. Meyers, ed., *The Children of Pride* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 1700.

manure,—I will have some socks knit for you as soon as possible and forward,—

I wrote you on the 28th advising that I had that day sent up to Columbus a sack of hominy, one of potatoes and a box containing eggs and sausages for you—I left them at the depot the next day, but they did not leave there until the . . .

I hope they will arrive in good order—

Three of our hands have been impressed into the Service of the State to work on fortifications about Mobile—they left three days since.¹⁹

The enclosed letter from your brother John was received since I last wrote you—

It has been raining most of the day, which will prevent us sowing oats tomorrow as we had intended.

Yours truly,
J. Wright

February 17, 1863

Dear Nephew,

Yours of the 4th was a week getting here the fault was at the Columbus Office,—

I lost eve t [sic] since the duplicate letter of your Brother John's—It is not necessary to forward it.

I would advise that you should give your brother full power to act for you.

¹⁹Impressment of slaves was only one of the ways the government "disturbed" the life of the farmer-planter. Planters, although paid for their slaves' labor, usually did not like impressment and in Alabama there were county, state and Confederate impressment agents. For a discussion of this practice see: Paul W. Gates, *Agriculture and the Civil War: The Impact of the Civil War*, (New York: Knopf, 1965); Clement Eaton, *A History of the Southern Confederacy*, (New York: Macmillan, 1954); and Emory Thomas, *The Confederate Nation, 1861-1865*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1979).

We shall probably plant a little corn next week—

You may expect work soon, Hope you are well prepared.

Yours truly,
J. Wright

March 10, 1863

Dear Nephew,

Yours of the 1st instant came duly to hand.—

I can let Capt. Dawson have as much Palma Christi seed as he wants.²⁰

I presume you think that I have forgotten the socks.

Not so.—But no thread was to be purchased in Columbus and we had to spin then dye and knit.—

I expect to go to Columbus tomorrow and will send three pair for you and Caesar sends two pairs of coarse ones for handy? They will go by express.

We have had frequent rains for two weeks and very little plowing for several days past—we have probably five hundred acres of corn planted.

The oats and wheat look well.

Dan was well on Sunday morning but during the day was taken with a congestive chill and died yesterday at 5 P. M.

We sent eight hands recently to Mobile and three previously, one of whom returned a week ago sick having had pneumonia. He is mending slowly. Let me know when you want money or anything else—

I have written to Mississippi about taxes, but can get no

²⁰Castor oil was extracted from this seed.

²¹Wright is referring to his land holdings in Mississippi.

answer—It is probable that I may leave for that region about the middle of next week.²¹

Yours truly,
J. Wright

P. S. 9 P. M.

The socks have just come in and I find are entirely too small in the feet for you—will have them replaced as soon as possible.

May 22, 1863

Dear Nephew,

While I was in Columbus on Wednesday I saw Lieut. Barnard and from him was glad to learn that you would soon be able to get a furlough to come home.

Write two or three days before you leave and let me know the day you will reach Columbus and I will have the buggy to meet you at Ft. Mitchell.—

Jars are very scarce with us.²² And if you have any too and bring them home with you, and we can return to you filled with butter, and probably honey.—

Barnard told me you had not yet received the pease—

No rain yet, and the crop suffering for want of it.—

All well

Yours truly,
J. Wright

²¹Jars were one of a number of items that became difficult to obtain. Wright mentions such shortages beginning with salt. One that can be seen from these letters in manuscript is writing paper. The quality deteriorates as the war goes on. For more on this see: Clement Eaton, *A History of the Southern Confederacy*; Emory Thomas, *The Confederate Nation 1861-1865*; Mary Elizabeth Massey, *Ersatz in the Confederacy*. (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1952); Ella Lonn, *Salt as a Factor in the Confederacy*. (New York: W. Neale, 1933).

July 7, 1863

Dear Nephew,

I have two letters from you unanswered. The last advised that your company was about to leave for Brunswick—Your clothes would have been ready, but as yet have not been able to get the colored trimming for the coat and pants. I go to town in the morning and will make another effort.

For several weeks we have had an abundance of rain and the corn and potato crop look well. The oats are all harvested but we have not as yet been able to have them in—the crop grows so rapidly that we have been compelled to keep the plows running whenever the earth was not too wet.

James has all his plows now putting in pease in the . . . flat.

We have still some measles at the bend but otherwise not much sickness.

Mayberry, his wife and children have recently had the measles and one of the latter is now very sick.

Very great interest is of course felt, in General Lee's movements in Pennsylvania & Maryland—I have great faith in his success.²³

Two companys [sic] are being raised in this county under the new call.—Boykin has joined one and I expect that James will also, although he can be of little service.

Yours truly,
J. Wright

August 19, 1863

Dear Nephew,

The enclosed letter from John giving the sad intelligence

²³Reference here is to the Battle of Gettysburg which would be a defeat for Lee. Vicksburg's fall is not mentioned. Wright seems to have concentrated principally on the eastern, Virginia theater.

of the death of your Aunt Phillips was received a few days since.²⁴

My relatives are leaving me very fast—²⁵ I wrote you on the 12th enclosing three coupons of forty dollars each which I presume you have seen.

In your letter to James of the 9th you speak of two of the soldiers in your group wanting some salt.—I am letting the soldiers have what I have to spare to some I sell & others give it,—But all the sacks in which I receive salt, I am obliged to return, *or* I get *no more*—I have no sacks to send them salt in,—But I will do this—Send each of them fifty pounds of salt to J. Ennis & Co. at Columbus,—some neighbor of each family may call there for it, bringing a sack to put it in.—And I will make them a present of it,—if it were to be sent on the Railroad there is no telling when if ever they would get it.

We are wanting rain for potatoes because of having had none for two weeks.

Yours truly,
J. Wright

September 21, 1863

Dear Nephew,

Yours of the 10th instant came duly to hand. I am sorry to learn that sickness prevails in your Company to some extent.—I would advise to keep under cover as much as possible after the dew commences falling in the evening.—By using proper precautions I am in hopes you will retain your health.

²⁴Elizabeth Wright had married James Phillips, thereby providing James Wright with three additional nephews and two additional nieces. One, especially, James W. Phillips, served as partner and broker for Wright in New York City and also corresponded voluminously with his uncle and relatives.

²⁵This is a true if melancholy fact. Besides the loss of his nephew Charles Jr., Wright had lost, since the war began, two sisters and a brother. He had one brother left, Daniel, in Ohio, who was to die in 1864. James Wright, with a few in-laws and one illegitimate son was to be left in a world of nephews and nieces.

It is excessively dry here and the probability is that we shall make very few pease and scarcely any potatoes. Yesterday and again this morning we had light frosts. Enough to scorch the potato vines and in some places to injure them so much that very little will be gathered from them even if we have plenty of rain hereafter.

I have now an overseer at the Bend—A Mr. Wagner—a discharged soldier, has been in the Army a year. He lived last with Major Dawson at his Coleebee Plantation.

The health of the people pretty good.

Yours truly,
J. Wright

October 10, 1863

Dear Nephew,

The shrimp came to hand a week ago today, they are very fine and not all gone yet.

We took them out of the shell and put them in vinegar, and are as good now as when received—The twine had been cut so as to make an opening for the hand and probably some of them had been taken out.—I sent up to Columbus this evening eight hands who will go to Mobile to work on the defenses there for sixty days.

I sent up one sack of sweet potatoes and another of hominy which had been sifted,—In the hominy sack is a small one filled with the small white pease.

I shall go to Columbus in the morning and will get transportation for them and take them to the railroad depot—We had a little frost again this morning as the weather is now cool enough to send you butter, I have ordered a jar full to be made for you and take it to Columbus probably in about a week and send it by Express.

The government agents are impressing horses in this neigh-

borhood for the artillery,—They have not yet called on me but I look for them everyday.

We gathered the corn in Sunflower yesterday and today have been taking it from Bolivar—The cob however is not thoroughly dry and we shall probably hold off for a while.

In the Bend we shall not gather many bushels of pease as we planted.

Some sickness at the L. House at the Bend very healthy.

Yours truly,
J. Wright

October 25, 1863

Dear Nephew,

Yours of the 8th came safe to hand.—On the 10th instant. I left at the Muscogee depot at Columbus one bag of potatoes and another of hominy, with transportation for the same. I have not been up there since.

I have ready for you two new undershirts, and one old one reformed, one blanket, and a jar of butter, the latter will be placed in a basket all of which will be taken to Columbus in a day or two and sent by express.

I have given away some blankets to soldiers and we are running low on them—I will have a cotton comforter made for you and forwarded.

You can say to John that is very difficult to form a proximate estimate of the quantity of cotton on hand,—I do not think there has been made this year much over a half a million bales, and on 1st January next there may be in the Confederacy three million five hundred thousand bales.—²⁶

²⁶One of the few references Wright makes to cotton in these letters. See Paul W. Gates, *Agriculture in Civil War*, "Corn becomes King", for a possible partial explanation.

I can see no prospect ahead of an early termination of the war,—Nor do I look for foreign intervention,—unless a war should occur between the Federal Government and some foreign power—

At the Bend we have been gathering corn during the last week—the point did not turn out as well as I expected.—We have on the whole made a good corn crop.—

We are now preparing some land to sow wheat shall put in more than last year.

Health of all pretty good.

Yours truly,
J. Wright

P.S. 28

I send by Express, one bundle containing blanket and shirts and one ham,—one basket containing jar of butter, I want some more shrimps. I enclose ten dollars use the basket that contains the jar of butter.

W.

January 12, 1864

Dear Nephew,

In your last letter you acknowledged the receipt of the bag of potatoes and box of . . . but stated the sack of hominy had not come to hand.—I am surprised at this as they all left Columbus together.

There were about two bushels of hominy.—I enclose express receipt—that if not yet received you may get pay for it.

I paid six dollars per hundred pounds freight on all.—

The oysters were a good while getting here,—And were *all*

spoiled. The jar that contained those in the box, was broken.—Do *not* send anything more to the care of E & L.—It is not necessary to send to the care of anyone.

And it is hardly necessary to send any more oysters,—the probability is that they will not be received in order—

It has been raining most of the time for two or three weeks and a part of the time excessively cold,—Mercury at 14, 17, and 18

We have had a pretty high river—covered nearly all of the bend.—What with the rain and cold weather but little work has been done.

Our mill creek was *very* high and the dam required a good deal of repair.

We killed the last of our fattening hogs on the 1st instant 149 in all weighing not quite 25,000 lbs.

I will send you some more hogshead cheese and sausages soon.

Whenever your jars are empty send them back with any empty sacks that you may have—Do you wish more hominy and potatoes? For these last, it would be best to get a transportation ticket—if there was a probability of there going forward at once, as the express charges \$6.00 per hundred.

Is there anything else that I have and you want?

There is no local news here.

Yours truly,
J. Wright

February 5, 1864

Dear Nephew,

I have two letters from you since my last.—That of 1st

instant the latest. We did not commence sowing oats until the 18th but I do not see any of (them) appearing above ground,

The wheat has not grown much. We have had good weather for plowing for two or three weeks and have all the mules at work, and the ground plows very well a light rain now would not be amiss—

I am ordered to send eight more hands to Mobile to be at Columbus on Thursday next,—I will try to send you a box there by Express.—

James has been ordered to go to Camp Watts for re-examination will leave in a few days.—

If Brooks succeeds in forming a battalion I think your chance ought to be good for a Lieutenancy. I hope you may succeed—We shall be glad to see you at home whenever you can obtain a furlough.—

Yours truly,
J. Wright

February 10, 1864

Dear Nephew,

I wrote to you on the 6th instant. I started the waggon for Columbus this evening with the negroes and their things bound for Mobile.

By it I sent a box to your address which I will send by Express, containing 12 sausages, some hogshead cheese, a jar of butter, 7½ dozen eggs, a bottle of vinegar—four pair of socks and some peanuts.

Also 2 pair of socks for . . .

We have had a great many cases of pneumonia at the summer house and there are still some—Edmund is now the sickest one there.—I forgot to tell you in my last that Jim the wag-

goner and head plowman died with it,—a great loss, as he was a capital servant.

Rose died three weeks or more since.—Josey at the Bend has it the only case there.—

James went to Camp Watts on Monday for reexamination and I expected him home this evening but he did not come.

We have cool mornings and pleasant dry days plowing and cleaning out ditches the principal work.

Yours truly,
J. Wright

P. S. 11 Columbus

James has returned and has to go back to Camp Watts on Monday.

The examining surgeon says that a most-absurd order has been sent by the Secretary of War²⁷ not to exempt for Myopia—but whenever he gets to the Army he will undoubtedly be discharged.

J. W.

I have delivered the box at the Express Office

April 25, 1864

Dear Nephew,

I will send the waggon to Columbus tomorrow evening and by it send one box to your address which contains four shirts and two collars (would have had more collars but for the want of cloth) and two hams. This I will send by Express—I also send one bag of peas and one of fresh ground hominy—This may be sent by freight train.

²⁷James A. Seddon, Secretary of War. The Confederate Government was attempting to expand the ranks for the 1864 campaigning season by severely limiting exemptions (New Law February 17, 1864).

In a letter to James recently you mentioned that you had been solicited to run for a vacancy in one of the Offices in your company but had declined.—

If you can be elected and have any disposition for it, why not take it,—I will furnish you with such money as you may require for an outfit, and afterwards.²⁸

As you are now in comfortable quarters I hope they may not order you to Virginia.²⁹

Wagner is yet confined to his bed and has been for two months.

Our strain of corn is not very good, but better than it promised two weeks since but it is all little stuff and does not grow.

We are running around it with the shooters following with the hay—We have planted more palma christi than heretofore and shall have some . . . sugar cane—Our wheat now looks pretty well, as good as any that I have seen, Oats generally a pretty fair strand but they are small.

I am selling some corn to the government but have received no money as yet.—I invested all that I had as I expected to be used in taxes,—If you need some money as soon as I receive any of the new currency will send you some.

James has not received an exemption but I do not apprehend any difficulty. There has been an entire change in the enrolling officers.

Yours truly,
J. Wright

²⁸James Wright continues his encouragement to James Jr. to become an officer. Volunteer units such as the Terrell Artillery were allowed to elect their officers. The first Confederate Conscription Act of April 16, 1862 (also the first in American history) had been partly designed to encourage volunteering by giving individuals thirty days to volunteer and avoid the stigma of being drafted. James Jr. enlisted May 15, 1862, just making it.

²⁹This is one of the Uncle's first cautionary comments to his nephews showing concern about potential military involvement.

June 21, 1864

Dear Nephew,

I have two letters from unanswered.—(sic)

On the 1st June we commenced cutting our wheat and on that day the rain began and has continued almost daily since. Much of the wheat has sprouted and I fear there is very little if any that will be fit flour.

The river water was today over nearly all the point, the lower part of the Bend, the Beaver dam and Terry Hill, all the rice field and Sunflower and most of Bolivar, and a part of the Gaillard.

We have not altogether done two days work in cultivating the crop since the 1st June, and in that time about seventeen inches has fallen of course the crop is getting (grassy?)

The impressing agent took six mules and my large carriage horse from me. He took a mule each in the place of Buccame, Ned Dandy, Ronnoke and Boston.³⁰

If I can I wish to plant the point again in corn when the water goes off.—

We are as well as usual.

Yours truly,
J. Wright

July 3, 1864

Dear Nephew,

We have had no rain since the 22nd last, And the crop is

³⁰According to the 1860 Census, there were 12 horses and 75 asses and mules on Wright's plantation. James B. Sellers, *Slavery in Alabama* (Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1950), pp. 30, says, "Wright owned the usual livestock found on large plantations, but he must have had exceptionally good stock for, although the numbers of each kind of animal were not unusually large, the total valuation was \$12,000." Wright words, ". . . took . . . from me", seem to indicate a note of personal loss.

suffering much more than it would have done, if we had only light ones previously,

Our corn prospect is very bad.—and potatoes are not promising.—

I will send you the hominy as soon as I can spare the mules from the crop to send a waggon to town.

I enclose you the three coupons for forty dollars each—the people are now in good health—

We are so much in the (grass?) that I have hauled in only so much of the wheat as could be done by the oxen.—

Yours truly,
J. Wright

* * *

James Wright died intestate August 21, 1864 of a "sudden illness". He was sixty-four years old. Savannah was captured in December in Sherman's "March to the Sea" and Columbus, Georgia was taken April 16, 1865 by James Wilson's Cavalry which passed through Russell County, Alabama.

James Jr. and James M. divided the land, cotton and other property, including slaves, between themselves and continued to run the plantation. But, because of the confusion at the war's end, the nature of the uncle's death, the conflicting claims and number of claimants (principally nephews and nieces), the estate was not settled until 1877.

BERT HENDERSON: DEEP SOUTH PHILOSOPHER

by

Irma R. Cruse

Alabama's third poet laureate — Bert Henderson — was a part of a culture in which the Deep South idealism was still strong; he was a poet who looked at the components of life in Alabama and found them good. Like the first laureate, Samuel Minturn Peck, Henderson reveled in the beauty and the "feel" of the land and yet there was a difference in the approach the two men took toward their writing. Peck mentioned on several occasions that he did not see himself as a poet, but Henderson took his poetic compulsion very seriously and in his works there was a philosophic outlook that gave them spiritual depth.

The difference between the poetry of Mary B. Ward, second laureate, and that of Henderson provides a study in contrasts, also. In the case of all three poets, it is clear that their poetry reflects their family background and their individual life styles. Henderson's background and his financial struggles, coupled with his idealistic temperament, need to be considered in any analysis of his literary work.

Elbert Calvin Henderson was born on November 8, 1903, in Glenwood, Alabama, a small community now located on Alabama highway 331 between Luverne and Brantley in Crenshaw County. In some of the biographical data consulted, Bert's birthplace is shown as Troy — a custom adopted by many persons of the early 1900's who felt that, since associates outside the state might not be familiar with the small community name, they should identify themselves as residents of the largest nearby town.

Bert's paternal grandfather, Elder J. E. W. Henderson, was long active in the Primitive Baptist movement in Alabama. He was recognized in his community and county as a person of intellect with definite leadership qualities. He edited a Primitive Baptist magazine in the 1800's. His son, Elder Albert Holloway Henderson (Bert's father), married Jeffery

Faulkner, and the couple had two children, Elbert Calvin (Bert) and Louise (Now Mrs. G. Hamill Johnson of Montgomery).

Jeffery Faulkner Henderson was a quiet, reserved woman, devoted to her husband and children. Albert Holloway Henderson became a minister in the Primitive Baptist Church, an unsalaried position. He has been described as follows:

Elder Henderson was self-educated, had a bright sense of humor and "a great personality," according to those who remember him. Though few people knew it, Elder Henderson had only three years of public schooling when he took the entrance exam and entered Troy State Normal School. In a short time he had earned his certificate to teach, later becoming a principal in the Alabama Public School System.¹

The two Henderson children grew up in a home dedicated to Christian living, with the combined influence of a father who was both preacher and school administrator. Jeffery, the mother, died from a serious illness when Louise, the younger child, was seven. The long illness of Mrs. Henderson had placed great financial and emotional strain on her husband. As soon as Bert was old enough to help out, he took responsibility for many of the chores around the home, helped look after his little sister, and began driving a school bus in the morning and afternoon, adding to those duties the job of driving a gravel truck in the late afternoon.

Bert and his father were very close, sharing hours of talk, family jokes, and laughter. The years of strain made themselves felt, however, and the father suffered an emotional breakdown. Bert stepped in and finished his father's term as substitute principal. He must have done well in his job, for he was offered the school for the next year. He turned down the offer because he had decided to enroll in the Teacher's College at Troy. His willingness to leave home to go to college was brought about, partly, by his father's remarriage. The stepmother's coming into the home brought some tension, and a rift developed between father and son.²

¹Ruth Hester, "Bert Henderson", unpublished article, on file in the Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, p. [2].

²*Ibid.*

Meanwhile, Bert had found a job in Montgomery which helped him earn the money to pay his way to school at Troy. He became desk clerk at the Exchange Hotel, where Sidney Lanier, another Alabama poet, had worked some years earlier. He coached a basketball team for a while;³ was a southpaw pitcher on his baseball team; and found time to play football in high school and college.⁴ His continuing interest in sports was evident by the pride with which he kept trophies for golf and for fishing exploits displayed in his home.

The young man has been described as being "starved for knowledge, a perfectionist, never satisfied with his work."⁵ He painted and played the violin. Sketches done during those early days showed merit, but he laid them aside in favor of writing poetry. His sister commented in later years, "He always had trouble sharing himself, except through his poetry."⁶ During the few minutes he might find while working at the hotel, he would scribble verses or bits of other writing to be typed after he went home late at night.

After completing his studies at Troy, Bert enrolled in the University of Alabama, working at night, and continuing to study and write. In 1925 he met Geraldine Downs, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. E. H. Downs of Prattville; she had just graduated from Huntingdon College and was teaching school. The young people fell in love. Bert and Geraldine were married on May 16, 1928, in the First Baptist Church in Montgomery, with Bert's best friend, Ray Gould, as best man. His fraternity brothers from the University of Alabama, the Phi Delta Kappas, entertained for the couple. The bride's parents gave what was described as a spectacular reception. The young Bert Hendersons then settled into the routine of married life; and both family and friends were pleased when, at the end of their first year, word came that they were expecting a baby.

Geraldine died giving birth to their son. Two days later, the baby died. Bert was crushed by the double blow to his

³Trudy Cargile, "Poet Doesn't Rest on Laurels," *Birmingham News Magazine*, May 13, 1962, p. 8 and 11.

⁴Letter from Frank Coleman, Anniston, Alabama, to Irma R. Cruse, Birmingham, Alabama, January 28, 1980.

⁵Ruth Hester, unpublished article.

⁶*Ibid.*

hopes and dreams and it took a long time for him to regain his enthusiasm for life. He worked out much of his heartache and disappointment through his writing. In fact, his literary efforts became more and more a means of release and of therapy. The young widower entered a short story in competition sponsored by *The Birmingham News*. When it was published in 1937, he settled into serious writing. As he spoke of his experiences in later years, he commented that his work as desk clerk at the Exchange Hotel, and a few years later at the Whitley Hotel, gave him an ideal situation for writing during those times when incoming and outgoing guests did not require his attention.

By 1939 he had received an invitation to join the Alabama Writers' Conclave. Soon after that, he was invited to join the group of poets who had organized the Alabama Poet's Society. He became active in both groups and had his first book of poems published about a year later. That volume, *House of Paradoxes*, was published by Banner Press (then located at Emory University, in Atlanta) in 1941.

In that same year he led a poetry workshop at the annual meeting of the Conclave at Alabama College in Montevallo. His reputation as a poet was bringing with it invitations to speak to various literary groups. The handsome, well-mannered young widower was agreeable and sought after, but retained his privacy, was withdrawn, and had acquired the habit of pacing back and forth as he talked or as he thought about his writing.

With the beginning of World War II, Montgomery was filled with increased activity as military installations there brought newcomers to the city. Bert Henderson found a rooming house on South Perry Street, close to the hotel where he worked, and convenient to downtown Montgomery, and he engaged a room there.

The move to the Benjamin Bosworth Smith home at 1103 Perry Street led to major changes in Bert Henderson's life. The house to which he moved had been built by Smith for himself, but he had been the architect for a number of other buildings in the Montgomery area. He had drawn the plans for the Governor's Mansion, located directly across from

his own home; he was the architect for the Union Station in Montgomery and drew the plans, also, for Flowers Hall at Huntingdon College. In the latter part of the 1920's Mr. Smith became involved in a building project of major importance financially, but the business venture failed, and Mr. Smith lost everything he had in the deal, except the family home. He died a short time later, leaving his widow, a son, Fred, and a daughter, Mary Middleton Smith.⁷

Benjamin Bosworth Smith's wife was Mary Middleton, a member of two prominent South Carolina families. Her relatives on both sides of the family, Arthur Middleton and Edward Rutledge, were signers of the Declaration of Independence. Archibald Rutledge, poet laureate of South Carolina, author, lecturer, and frequent speaker at meetings of the Alabama Writers' Conclave, was her cousin. She had been brought up with the knowledge that her family had played an important part in the nation's history.

When her husband died and the family was left with limited resources, Mrs. Smith and her daughter, Mary, found it necessary to rent out one of their rooms — a step that brought in a small regular income from the young man who moved into that room. That man was Bert Henderson.

After living in the Smith home for a few years, Bert fell in love with Mary Middleton Smith. One of the comments made by friends who knew the couple was that Mary was a few years older than Bert. The two were married on March 2, 1946. They continued to live in the Perry Street home, and when Mrs. Smith died Mary inherited the property, but had no money to keep it up. The house became rundown as the ravages of time took some of the splendor and glamour away, and wornout wiring, leaking roof, and other signs of decay made themselves felt. The house was filled with lovely old furniture, silver, china, valuable paintings — all a part of the Middleton Smith heritage.

By the time of the marriage, Bert had become active in the two writing organizations he had joined and Mary

⁷Personal interview with Milo Howard, Director, Department of Archives and History, State of Alabama, by Irma R. Cruse, July 18, 1980.

entered into his activities with him. As early as 1938 he had been asked to read some of his poems at the Poetry Matinees that were an important part of the Alabama Writers' Conclave programs. At the 1940 Conclave meeting he was Dean of the Poetry workshop, presided at the Poetry Matinee, and read two of his poems "Singing Flame" and "The Country Church." His book *House of Paradoxes* is listed in the summary of books published by Alabama authors for 1946. Because of the war, the Conclave did not hold regular annual meetings in 1941-1945. In 1947 Henderson appeared once again on the program as a contributing poet at the Poetry Matinee. By 1951 he had published the book of humorous verse entitled *Blame Noah*, with illustrations by Miss Annie Seay Owen of Montgomery, and was selling his poems to such publications as *American Mercury* and the *New York Times*.

On a bright summer day about 1954 the Perry Street home of the Hendersons caught fire from the neglected wiring. The fire almost gutted the second floor of the big two-story house and did some damage to the rest of the house. It was a real tragedy as far as Mary was concerned. Helen Blackshear, a neighbor who lived on South Perry Street about two blocks from the Smith home, offered the use of a small apartment until the Hendersons could make financial arrangements to have the home at 1103 South Perry repaired.

It was hard for Mary Middleton Henderson to get over the depression caused by her losses in the fire. She would make her way down to the ruins and spend hours looking through debris, trying to find articles that could be saved. Helen walked with Mary often and has said: "Sometimes we could come across a fire-blackened spoon or a dish that she wanted to put with her other treasures, hoping it could be preserved. All Mary could talk about was rebuilding. . . ."⁸

Bert was sympathetic with his wife's suffering, but he had to go to work every day. He found some relief from the emotional upset of the fire by spending every possible free moment writing. The couple spent more and more time to themselves, avoiding entertaining or going out socially. Be-

⁸Letter from Helen Blackshear, Montgomery, Alabama, to Irma R. Cruse, Birmingham, Alabama, January 24, 1980.

fore the fire, Mary had operated a kindergarten in her home and many children of prominent Montgomery families went to "Miss Mary's kindergarten." She closed her school after the fire and devoted much of her time to promoting and encouraging her husband's writing. She did more writing herself. She had built up a successful business of entertaining children at birthday parties, but she gave that up, too. That was a grim period for the Bert Hendersons. They were finally able to get some repairs done that made the first floor of the old home habitable, and had the roof repaired, and were able to move back in.

In 1956 Bert was elected president of the Alabama Writers' Conclave. His book of poems, *Eternal Symphony*, was published that year.

By the time Mary B. Ward had completed her four term as poet laureate, Conclave members were convinced that Bert Henderson would be a worthy successor. The Conclave nominated him to Governor John Patterson and, in a ceremony at the state capitol on Monday, December 21, 1959, Bert was officially named Poet Laureate of Alabama.

A feature story in the *Montgomery Advertiser* by Madera Spencer (herself a past president of the Conclave) described the event. Presiding over the twenty-minute ceremony was the Rev. W. S. Thompson, Vernon, president of the Conclave at that time. The new poet laureate was presented to Governor Patterson by Dr. Emmett Kilpatrick of Troy, chairman of the nominating committee and past president of the Conclave (1939-1941). The oath of office was administered by Mrs. Mabel Amos, recording secretary of the State Executive Department, after which the governor signed the certificate of office and presented it to the new laureate.

During the ceremony, which was attended by about fifty friends of the poet laureate, including a number of Alabama writers, Bess Lambert, Birmingham writer, presented a certificate of appreciation to Mrs. Mary Ward, who was ending her four-year term as poet laureate. J. Mitchell Pilcher was chairman of the arrangements committee (which included Mrs.

Madera Spencer and Mrs. Elizabeth W. Sheehan, both past presidents).⁹

Although bylaws of the Conclave set the poet laureate's term of office at four years, there was no restriction at that time in the number of terms he could serve. In 1963, Henderson was nominated for a second term; and he was serving a third term in 1967 when his wife, Mary, died in her sleep early one winter morning.

Bert was crushed by his wife's death. They had been through years of restricted means; she had been supportive and encouraging as he threw himself into his writing; her death had come when their money was low and when he needed her to believe in him. According to a friend and neighbor, Bert left a note on the door asking that he be contacted at 365 Felder Avenue, and he fled from the Perry Street house to the hotel where he found an unoccupied room and locked himself in.¹⁰

He had to come out of that room, of course, and face the reality of Mary's death. All the sadness of arranging for a funeral, of greeting friends and relatives, had to be faced. The circumstances were especially tragic because the ground was frozen so hard during one of Montgomery's most severe winters that it was impossible to dig a grave. Services were held but the burial had to be delayed. Bert was distraught, and it took him a long time to be able to begin writing again.

He returned to the annual meetings of the Alabama Writers' Conclave, and accepted the homage given the state's poet laureate at official functions of the group, but it was obvious that his heart was not in these matters. He spent most of his time at the Conclave with his close friends, Charles C. McWhorter of Moulton, Frank Coleman of Anniston, and Dr. W. S. Thompson of Vernon. After about 1971 or 1972 he did not return to Conclave meetings, becoming almost a recluse, except for contacts with one or two close friends in Montgomery. Bert's death came on a Saturday afternoon, September 15, 1974,

⁹Madera Spencer, "Montgomerian Given Title of Poet Laureate for State," *Montgomery Advertiser*, December 22, 1959.

¹⁰Interview, Milo Howard, July 18, 1980.

as he sat in the living room of one of those close friends, watching a major league ball game. He was buried in Greenwood Cemetery in Montgomery.

A backward glance at the events of the poet laureate's life reveals clearly that Mary Middleton Smith Henderson and a few close friends gave Bert the support and encouragement he needed at crucial periods. Mary had great creative ability and talent in writing, but she sublimated her own interests as she worked at promoting her husband's work. Bert referred to his wife as his severest critic and right-arm assistant. She said that he was a writer of many moods. In an interview with Trudy Cargile, Mary commented: "I am constantly amazed at his range—from agrarian studies of farm people to children, from the humorous to the romantic."¹¹ Miss Cargile referred to the fact that Mrs. Henderson had started working on a collection of verse of her own, dealing with and written to appeal to children and parents. Since she had the years of experience in teaching in kindergarten as well as entertaining children at birthday parties, she had the knowledge and expertise that would have equipped her for a writing career of her own in the field of juvenile literature had she lived.¹²

One of the closest friends of Bert was Rebecca Agnew Holt of Montgomery, another person who was convinced of his genius. She, like his wife, encouraged him and assisted with the Conclave program one year at least by appearing on one of the panels. In his later years after his wife died, the poet found a sympathetic friend in the person of Kathryn Westcott Crenshaw, another Montgomerian. In fact, according to several reports, he was in Mrs. Crenshaw's home at the time of his death. The Conclave friends, other writers, gave him verbal and emotional support as he worked to get his own poetry into print and to encourage young writers who turned to him for help.

Among the published works of Bert Henderson are *House of Paradoxes* (1941), *Bright Armor* (1950), *Blame Noah* (1953), *Eternal Symphony* (1956), *The Immortal Legions* (1966), and *The Ultimate Harvest*, accepted in 1973 but returned unpublished after his death. He was a contributor to

¹¹Cargile, *Birmingham News Magazine*, May 13, 1962.

¹²*Ibid.*

The New York Times, *American Mercury*, *Southern Literary Messenger*, and many other magazines. He edited a poetry column for three years.¹³

Honors and awards marked the poet's last years. In competition among poets of sixty-five countries, he received the International Award given by Poets Laureate International for his book *Immortal Legions*. The presentation was made at an awards banquet in the Manila Hotel in Manila hosted by the American Embassy. Henderson received a gold medal inscribed by the President of the Philippines, with laurel wreath and citation. He was given the honorary degree of Litt. D. by the China Arts Collective, World University and University of Asia. He received a Diploma of Merit from the president of Poets Laureate International and numerous awards from the Poetry Society of Alabama.

Henderson's biographical sketch appeared in the *International Who's Who in Poetry, 1974-1975*, which was published after his death. A fellow-poet, Mrs. Rosamon Henderson of Birmingham, set seven of his poems to music. His works were read over CBS, NBC, and Mutual networks. He won a national awards given by CBS to add to his other prizes and awards given by radio, local, and network programs. He wrote one long folk poem for possible television adaptation.

With the long list of awards and other recognition for Henderson, a reader finds it difficult to be objective in appraising his work. The subject matter is varied, as already mentioned, but his major work was written to commemorate the Civil War Centennial and was his last published volume to appear during Henderson's lifetime.

Acknowledgments of work previously printed in publications of national scope indicate the variety of markets that Henderson's work had reached. Among those are *The Lyric*, *Oregonian Verse*, *The American Bard*, *Wisconsin Poetry Magazine*, *Progressive Farmer*, *Caravan*, *Mobile Press-Register*, *South Magazine*, *Scimitar & Song*, *The Bard*, *Explorer Magazine*, *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, *Parish Bulletin*, *Whispers*,

¹³*International Who's Who in Poetry, 1974-1975* (Cambridge, England, 1975), p. 196.

and others.

Perhaps the best-known and most popular of the five published books of poetry of Alabama's third poet laureate is *Eternal Symphony*, first published in 1956, the year of his presidency of the Alabama Writers' Conclave. A second printing by Banner Press of Birmingham appeared in 1962 as a part of the Versecraft Series. *Eternal Symphony* is dedicated to Mary Middleton with the moving statement "for this is her book." That kind of dedication speaks immediately about the kind of man who is writing—gentle, loving, and appreciative.

Henderson has divided his poems into sections according to subject matter, although there are certain themes that run throughout the book. The first group of thirteen poems is classified as "Eternal Symphony," and individual subjects include "Proud Journey," "Cathedral," "Counsel," "Eternal Symphony," "A Prayer," "On Listening to My Father," "Of Words," "My Heart Cried Out," "Prayer for a New Home," "An Agnostic Speaks," "Nothing Alone," "The Testament," and "Hearts Never Need to Sorrow."

If there were no biographical information available about the poet himself, it would be easy to see from the context of his work that he is a man to whom duty is important, that he has a religious background and a strong personal faith, that he is a person who has lived close to the earth, and that he is well-acquainted with both joy and sorrow. There is little emphasis placed on formal worship but the individual and personal relationship with God comes through clearly:

Proud Journey

I have watched Him rustle the leaves of a waiting aspen
With quiet fingers, and loose a symphony
Of wind to the listening hills, that echoed softly
An infinite melody.¹⁴

The poet's references to duty are coupled with those of beauty:

Lead me in the paths of duty.
Keep my heart aware of beauty.¹⁵

¹⁴Bert Henderson, *Eternal Symphony* (Birmingham, 1962), p. 14.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 17.

In the "Prayer for a New Home" there is that reminder of the importance of duty showing up again:

Help us to keep

This house a sanctuary we may share
With those we love—a haven set apart—
Of peace and hope, of earnest dedication
To the simple ritual of duty. . . .¹⁶

In addition to the poems grouped around "Eternal Symphony," there are the following subdivisions:

Infinite Wonder (eleven poems)

Turn of the Seasons (seventeen poems)

Beauty Is Articulate (twenty poems)

Wings of the Mind (twenty-two poems)

From the Crucible (twelve poems).

In "Souls May Go Hungry" there is the duty reminder

again as he concludes a lyric that begins:

She stood beyond the sill and looked across
The furrowed acres stretching to the south,
And felt within her heart a sudden loss
She could not understand. . . .

She rang the dinner bell behind the shed
Souls may go hungry—bodies must be fed.¹⁷

The ability to understand the longings and heartaches of daily life in a rural setting shows through some of the poet's poems about the people he has known well. There is a poem called "Relativity" that speaks eloquently of this insight:

She was content. She never asked or wanted
What lay beyond the hour of the day
That circumscribed her life. Nor was she haunted
By ghosts of fear or want. She had a way
Of making out when flood or drought would claim

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 20.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 33.

The fields or pastureland. She always said
Things evened up, and if a bad year came,
A better one was sure to lie ahead.
She felt no lack of things she did not own.
She did not miss what she had never known.¹⁸

The same type of understanding is apparent when he contrasts the goals and dreams of Dan Barfield and Ezekiel Brown in "Past The Barfield Place":

The tracks ran by Dan Barfield's place,
And every afternoon at four,
The Limited Express would race,
With whistle blast and a mighty roar,
Across the trestle and down the fill
By the western forty. And when Dan heard,
He would stop and lean on his plow until
The echoes faded. His heart was stirred
With a loneliness he could not explain,
For he always thought there would come a day
He would be riding on such a train.
He would sell the farm and he'd go away
From rock and stubble. A man had pride
And he planned on living before he died.

The engineer of The Limited
Was Ezekiel Brown, and when each day
He and his fiery engine sped
By the Barfield Place, he would often say,
On a farm like that he could settle down
And do the things that were in his mind.
He was tired of his journeys from town to town,
And he thought some day he would maybe find
A place of his own, with a bit of land,
A house, a barn, and a cow or two,
And if things worked out like he had them planned,
He'd have a tractor. They never knew
Of each other's dream, as the train would roar
By the Barfield Place each day at four.¹⁹

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 38.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 44.

There is a tribute to Sidney Lanier, a poet admired by Bert and one with whom he identified more closely perhaps than any other because of the fact that both had been desk clerks at the same hotel. He begins with these words:

I have been intimate with one who sleeps
The deep immortal slumber of the great. . . .²⁰

Another reference, a truly personal one, comes in the verses titled "The Magic Wand," subtitled "of M.M.," in which he speaks of Mary Middleton and her kindergarten days:

Her magic countless children know
I have seen her shining wand
Open doors to lands of wonder,
Taking little lives beyond
The rim of time that they might see
A fairyland of fantasy. . . .²¹

Another aspect of his personal life is revealed when he writes simply and poignantly of "My Son," the baby who lived only two days:

He is so often with me—
The son I never had—
Bright of eye and strong of limb,
Adventure in the heart of him,
And never, never sad.

Time never walks beside him,
Except at my decree,
So when we tire of childish things,
We'll go to new adventurings
And he'll grow old with me.²²

In the publication of the Alabama State Poetry Society Bert Henderson's work is represented to the time of his death. The quality of his poems appearing in *The Sampler* is good and is representative of the subject matter that predominates in his

²⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 62-63.

²¹*Ibid.*, p. 68.

²²*Ibid.*, p. 70.

books—lyric poems that continue to reveal his closeness to nature and his roots in the soil of Alabama. His perception of the emotions and dreams of the people he has known, has worked with, and has loved shows through those poems that look hard at individuals and groups.

One of the few poems that narrow his attention to more sophisticated areas of life is one reprinted in the Spring 1972 issue of *The Sampler*:

Thoughts at a Cocktail Party

Call for refills lest the mask slip
 and the glib tongue lose
 the sudden laughter, the clever quip.
 Let the mind refuse
 to look beyond the elusive moment, the hour—
 time's truce will pass.
 So pledge a toast, lest the heart cower,
 then shatter the glass.²³

Although other poets write on similar subjects, this one seems out of keeping with Henderson's other work. It takes a hard look at the average cocktail party, of course, but this particular poet is at his best when speaking of different topics and more nature-related areas of human experience.

Much more in keeping with the themes he usually chooses is "These I Would Keep":

These I would store in the heart's deep vault,
 Ever to keep as the seasons turn—
 Carillons of rain on an April day,
 A heart's deep music, sunsets that burn. . . .

The poet laureate ends that poem with a couplet that repeats the refrain that comes over and over in his work:

Through the seasons I seek to find
 Beauty to store in the vaults of mind.²⁴

²³*The Sampler*, IV, Spring 1972, 39.

²⁴*Ibid.*, p. 2.

In "The Philosopher" he repeats what is obviously his personal philosophy:

They sat there in the lamplight. Overhead
The rain beat on the shingled room, and night
Pressed hard against the pane. Slow thunder prowled
Across the hills, and lightning deftly spun
A transient web among the trees outside.
The woman said at last, "Three days of rain,
The storm will set the planting back a week,
And like as not the creek will overflow
Into the lowland pasture. Seems as how
A body can't get started in the spring."

The man slow-packed his pipe and moved his chair
So he could look into the dark outside.
His voice was low. "Right now it seems to me
We got no natural right to criticize
The way things turn. Now take the wind and rain.
It comes according to God's way, and if he seems
To do contrary-wise to what we plan,
I reckon He's a reason. Here, right now,
I got a sort of feeling deep inside,
If He was here to sit a little while,
I reckon He could tell us why He lets
The rain and wind keep back the sun a spell.
He's got it figured out. The Book says so."
He turned and faced the woman. "Reckon that
I sometimes get strange notions, like the Lord
Is just a man who's got a pact with me,
And we can talk things out when there's a need.
It gives a man a comfort in his heart."

The woman smiled a slow and knowing smile,
And spread the patchwork quilt upon the bed.
The man relit his pipe and turned a page
Within his testament. An hour passed.
He stepped outside. No cloud was overhead.
A new moon rose along the eastern ridge,
And new-washed stars hung in the arching sky.²⁵

Among the many interesting revelations about Bert Henderson's appreciation of the encouragement from friends are the varied dedicatory acknowledgments for his published work. As has already been mentioned, the first book, *House of Paradoxes*, was dedicated to three individuals, Bert's father, Shirley Dillon White, and Mary Middleton Smith (whom he later married). *Bright Armor* is dedicated to "Mary Middleton—My Own Bright Armor," and *Eternal Symphony* carries the message: "Dedicated to Mary Middleton for this is her book." Henderson's last published work, "*The Immortal Legions*, is dedicated to Rebecca Agnew Holt, a close friend and one who had been a program participant for the Alabama Writers' Conclave in 1964. Her subject "Growing Up Knowing Little, Caring Less" suggests a sense of humor in her approach to writing.

The two volumes that preceded *Eternal Symphony*—*House of Paradoxes* and *Bright Armor*—were both published by Banner Press and were a part of the Versecraft Series. The first was a seventy-three-page book, with three sections. The first section included twenty-eight poems, and carried the general heading of "House of Paradoxes," from the title poem. The second section, fourteen poems, was called "No Certain Altar." The third section, "The Brimming Cup," contained sixteen poems, with the last poem, "Retrospect," written from a woman's viewpoint. The poet experimented with many different verse forms and the ballad-type story told in "Retrospect" is a form not often seen—with alternating three-line and two-line stanzas. Every line in each stanza rhymes. The poem is quoted in part:

I still remember the day he came
To my father's house and called my name,
And lit my heart like a sudden flame.

I was younger then, and my face was fair,
With never a wrinkle anywhere.

And he was tall and lean and tanned;
He courted me and said he planned
For us to live upon his land.

We wed one day in the village church;
I trembled under his gentle touch.

After the wedding my mother cried,
The men drank cider to toast the bride,
And I felt happy and warm inside.

And he told Pa that all his life
He had dreamed of marrying such a wife.

I kept his home as a woman should,
Baked and mended and cut the wood,
And helped with the planting when I could.

But after we plowed and reaped and sowed,
There was little to pay on the debts we owed.

One year when prices were good on wheat,
I bought a dress, red shoes for my feet,
And we had store-kept things to eat.

But next year weavils ruined the corn.
And Don, my seventh son, was born.

Like all the others he wouldn't stay;
Said that farming would never pay.
I don't know where he is today.

For forty years we saw it through,
And yesterday my John went, too.

He is lying now on the other bed,
And I, who often have wished me dead,
Wonder why death picked him instead.

I KEEP ON WISHING THE RAIN WOULD STOP,
THE GRASS WILL COVER THE COTTON CROP.²⁶

Bright Armor was a ninety-page publication, following much the same format as the others; that is, poems were separated into sections under headings that were generally descriptive of the contents. The book has eighteen poems grouped under "No Greater Heights" and twenty-four under "Revelation." There are sixteen under "Infinite Search" and

²⁶Bert Henderson, *House of Paradoxes* (Emory University, 1941), pp. 72-73.

seventeen headed "Criterion."

We can see again the personal attitudes reflected in several of the poems in *Bright Armor*. Two are quoted below:

Tenth Anniversary
(To M.M.)

The firelight flickers and the night grows late,
We sit and watch the hungry tongues of flame
Consume each mellow log. The hours wait
Upon our pleasure. Time is but a frame
To hold the golden years that we have known
In retrospect. The world is shut away
Beyond these walls and we are left alone,
Remembering all the heart may know or say.

Beyond the sill the slow tide haunts the beach—
We hear a boat's lone whistle through the night;
The ghostly trees nod slowly, each to each,
Their limbs moss-turbaned. Quietly dim the light,
And bank the embers. Our first decade past,
We find each year more shining than the last.²⁷

Readers who follow the emotions expressed in the poem entitled "To a Mother I Have Found" will find it especially moving as they become aware of Bert's loss of his own mother early in life.

To a Mother I Have Found
(To M.M.R.S.)

Easter is here again, this hallowed day
On which we offer tribute to the One
Who died on Calvary, and try to say
A simple prayer of thanks for wind and sun,
And all material things; of hope and love—
Of music and of beauty in the heart—
The ministry of hands that reach above
The retinue of days. . . .

²⁷Bert Henderson, *Bright Armor* (Emory University, 1956), p. 16.

There is a part
Of my own life such fragile hands have reached—
To ease a pain, eradicate a fear—
There is a glorious spirit that has breached
A void I knew, and brought me very near
To one who filled my childhood, decades past,
And now but lives in dreams and memory. . . .
There is a life whose patterned mold was cast
In loveliness—in truth and purity.
And as I pay tribute this Easter day,
And thank my God for blessings I have known,
There is a prayer I reverently say
For one I deeply love, and call my own.²⁸

Bert Henderson's poetry may be uneven in quality, but the good outweighs the less than the best, and the excellent appears so often that it keeps the reader exalted and uplifted.

It is satisfying to see his craftsmanship, his excellent use of rhyme, meter, and imagery. Mention of lyric poetry dealing with nature sounds like boredom until a reader finds himself pulled into the magic of Henderson's fresh, intimate, nature-born-and-bred word pictures. His poems reveal feelings, emotions, scenes that are common to us all—that we can all identify with. They help us recall our own early experiences and shed new light on old emotions.

For the prize-winning volume, *The Immortal Legions*, it is more difficult to express enthusiasm. The amount of research done by Bert is evident, and his subject matter—the Confederacy and the Civil War—is one that is sure of winning a sympathetic audience in the South. There are several flaws, however, that should be mentioned.

First of all, even in a book of poetry, it seems important to make use of citations, references, or bibliographical information to assure the reader of authenticity. None of that was done—or, at least, none was included in the printed text. It is a serious hindrance to the pursuit of additional information about some of the individuals mentioned—especially when the reader seeks to learn more background data about the women he includes in his text.

²⁸*Ibid.*

The printing and general layout, including choice of type-face, are less professional-looking than his earlier books. All of those weaknesses may have been caused by financial problems or by the choice of a printer; but they are obvious flaws. The third criticism, and a more significant one, is directed at the verse form used by the poet. Bert Henderson was a poet of immense talent and ability, but he used a mixture of free verse, blank verse, and prose in such a way that the result sometimes became a hodge-podge. Some of the sections are written with alternating end-rhymes, but they are artificial and strained. By making such an obvious, unnatural effort to achieve exact rhyme, he lost the feel of poetry.

The content of the poems is mature. "A Trap for General McClellan" has exact imagery, explicit details, and accurate characterization of the general. As Henderson introduces his readers to "Belle Boyd," he gives fascinating information about an obscure heroine of the war; however, the prose history camouflaged as poetry distracts.²⁹

Even Shakespeare had his weaker poetry. In evaluating the works of Alabama's third poet laureate, the reader can find pleasure in turning from *The Immortal Legions* to the reflective lyric poems such as "Never The Same Hour."

Winter withers the leaf
That will quietly fall.
Still stands the tree
Sturdy and tall.

Winter will pass
And the tree flower.
But never the same leaf . . .
The same hour.³⁰

Boyhood on the farm close to the elemental pulse of life put its seal on Bert Henderson. That experience gave him the ability to speak directly to the hearts of his readers. He wrote of places and people they could identify with, of the kind of life they knew. Like his predecessors, Samuel Minturn

²⁹Bert Henderson, *The Immortal Legions* (Northport, Alabama, 1966), pp. 29-30.

³⁰*Eternal Symphony*, p. 86.

Peck and Mary B. Ward, Henderson spoke to and for Alabamians. Alabama is a state that combines the rural life with an equally significant life that is tied to industry, to business, and to educational administration. After Henderson's death, a poet laureate was chosen who spoke the language of the laureates before him, but who enlarged the scope of his writing to include new forces and new voices. William Young Elliott followed Bert Henderson as the state's poet laureate.

FROM TENNESSEE TO TEXAS—THROUGH ALABAMA

The 1860 Diary of William Joseph Camp

Edited by William R. Snell

In the fall of 1860 over 20 residents of Chatata Valley (Bradley County, Tennessee) decided to emigrate to Grayson County, Texas. The group consisted of three families, a family slave, and her three children. Sixteen days of their two month trip were spent traveling through North Alabama and present an observer's impressions of some of the people and communities of the area on the eve of the Civil War.

The senior members of the move were William and Margaret Cowan Camp and their five children: Sterling, 24, John Lee, 21, William Joseph, 19, Archibald, 17, and their only daughter, Margaret E., 14. They were accompanied by their oldest son, James, 27, and his family: Susan Lay Camp, 25, their daughter, Darthula, 1, and the wife's sister, Miny Lay, 17. Their two-year-old daughter, Mary E., may also have gone with the son's family.

Each member of the Camp family had been born in Tennessee, and was listed in the 1850 and 1860 census records. In 1850 William Camp had real estate valued at \$4,250. By 1860 his real estate was valued at \$9,000, and his personal property was appraised at \$12,000. He was financially much better off than many of his Bradley County neighbors. Archibald and Margaret had attended school in 1860.

Anderson and Malinda Coleman and their six children were the third family to make the journey. This family, with their oldest son, were listed in the 1850 census. Ten years later they had five additional children, all born in Tennessee. In 1860 the family included Anderson, 38, Malinda, 36, Patterson, 11, Isam (male), 9, Sarelda, 7, Rebecca, 5, Nancy, 3, and Arby, a six-month-old daughter. Mr. Anderson held real estate worth \$1,000 and \$200 in personal property according to the 1860 census. The three oldest children had attended school in Bradley County.

Mrs. William Camp had suffered a stroke six weeks after

bearing their daughter, so a slave, Aunt Ruth, was purchased to help her. Aunt Ruth and her three children—the only slaves the family ever owned—made the trip to Texas with the family. There were at least 23 members in the migrating party. Joseph, our 19 year old diarist, was the fourth son of five born to William and Margaret Camp. He had been born March 21, 1841, in Tennessee.

Reflecting his agricultural background, Joseph wrote of land, crops, stock, slaves, mountains, valleys, water, traveling conditions, and distances. For a person so young, he was a good observer. He recorded his impressions of the villages, towns, and cities along the route. He was impressed with internal improvements, especially the railroads and steamboats. Several fairs were in progress as they passed. Noticeably absent are references to God or religious observances, as were references to many members of their entourage.

Reminiscent of early frontier humor, we chuckle at references to a still, and possible rascality (Sept. 30). A broader grin greets the episode of Mr. Keller, who priced his "fine stock" beyond reason (Oct 1), and the antics of gizzardless Mr. Mills, the opportunist, who created an income over his self-made, impassable stream (Nov. 16).

DIARY OF WILLIAM JOSEPH CAMP

September 20, 1860. Today, being a pleasant day, we concluded to start on our journey to Texas. We began at about 12 and all our teams performed very well. After bidding our friends farewell, we pursued our journey about three miles and encamped at Hayes Camp or Pull-tite, where we enjoyed our first night in fine spirits.

Sept. 21. This morning found all of us well and everything passed off very well. We came to the beautiful town of Cleveland situated on the East Tennessee & Georgia Railroad where we halted some three hours on business, after which we continued our journey without any trouble. After traveling 10 miles, we pitched our tent in a beautiful grove in Blax Fox Valley near what is called Tucker's Chalybeate Springs. This valley along the Cleveland & Chattanooga Railroad lies well,

and from its general appearance will produce wheat and corn in great abundance.

Sept. 22. This morning we got a very good start and traveled without much difficulty through the extreme southwest corner of Bradley County and down Hurricane Creek. After traveling about 15 miles, we camped near the state line. The journey wearied us and our stock because of a very bad road through White Oak Mountains.

Sept. 23. This morning found us rolling out of Tennessee into the state of Georgia. Five miles of travel over a beautiful road brought us to the town of Ringgold, Georgia, situated on the state railroad. Ringgold, containing fine houses, a small business section, and about 1200 inhabitants, is situated in a very good country. Here we crossed the Chickamauga River and passed up Pea-vine Valley, where we saw the best corn that I have seen this season. After driving about 20 miles on a very nice road lying on the west side of Taylor's Ridge, we camped for the night at a small opening on a farm belonging to a man by the name of Lowery.

Sept. 24. After taking a good night's rest, we rose and prepared to leave. After breakfast we continued our journey. Today we traveled over some of the nicest country that I ever saw, although it is mostly of thin soil. We found some very good land on the Coosa River and two other small streams, which was the limit of good land seen today. We saw a good many cotton fields, and from what I know about cotton growing, I would guess that it is too late to yield a good crop. We also saw a great many gin-houses and cotton presses which is a right smart curiosity—to a person raised in East Tennessee. Late in the evening we came to the small town of Summerville, which is well situated for a large town, having a large spring rising on the west side and flowing through the north part of town. With no connection with any other place by railroad, and surrounded by much poor land, the town has never grown very large. After driving 20 miles, we pitched our tent for the night, about one mile south of town.

Sept. 25. This morning we got a very good start and traveled without any trouble along a very good road. [The

Alabama state line was about 10 miles southwest of Summer-ville.] The day's journey is mostly down the Chattooga River, where we found very good land and plenty of kinky heads [slaves] out picking cotton. These were the only people seen today except at a small place called Gaylesville, Alabama situated on the west side of the Chattooga River. After traveling about 23 miles, we camped for the night on the west side of the Chattooga River.

Sept. 26. This morning found us in very good spirits. We geared up and continued our journey without any trouble. Six miles along the road brought us to a small place called Blue Pond, so named because of a large pond, which has been sounded to a depth of 450 feet without finding bottom. This town is made of a small grocery, a stage stand, and a wagon shop. One mile from Blue Pond we reached the foot of Look-out Mountain, which is about half a mile high and had the roughest road that I have seen on my route. With all hands to the wheels and a good driver, with some difficulty, we got all wagons upon the mountain safe and sound. After about 12 miles we camped upon the mountain near an old acquaintance of father's by the name of Brindley.

Sept. 27. This morning we were on the road again by eight o'clock, and three miles of driving brought us to the turn of the mount where we went down. When we got about half-way down the mountain, I heard a powerful rumbling and roaring above me—something similar to distant thunder or an earthquake. There then broke into a scream for help—unsurpassed by the voice of Tecumseh—from a hack driver, who could be distinctly heard 7 miles away.

Sept. 27 continued. The hack driver's knees came into collision with my "dadies" side of the wagon, and broke about five of the wheel's ribs. The driver went over, his collar bone came in contact with a sand rock, which left a considerable piece of skin on the rock. As good luck would have it this was the only flesh wound made during this exciting time. All of this confusion was, nothing more nor less, than the overturning of the hack, with rig and wooden leg in it. After the hack was replaced, we passed on to a place called Van Buren, consisting of a square formed by horse racks, a doctor shop,

and tin shop. About 3 o'clock we came to the foot of Sand Mountain, where we got some mountain water, and by applying manpower to the wheels, as heretofore, we got upon the mountain with less difficulty than was expected. After traveling 15 miles we camped on Sand Mountain near an old gentleman by the name of Williams, who sold us corn for our stock by us claiming to be all for John Breckenridge and Joseph Lane [the Southern Democratic candidates]. That night one of our mares got loose and attacked another in battle, during which they both were badly hurt.

Sept. 28. We were all well except the old man who was scarcely able to travel from the wounds he received yesterday when the hack turned over. The day's journey was on the top of Sand Mountain. The sand, in some places, is very deep and pulled our horses tighter than any previous day since we started, consequently we traveled only 12 miles today and camped on the same mountain.

Sept. 29. Three miles travel brought us safely to the foot of the mountain. Two additional miles brought us to Warrenton, situated at the foot of Raccoon Mountain. We stopped here to take a snack of dinner at a large spring flowing out of the south side of the town. Here we found a widow on her way to Texas. She had been detained here several days, because her children were sick. Her name was Turner, from Hamilton County, Tennessee, who was on her way to Red River County, Texas.

After eating our dinner and letting our horses cool, we found that one of our mares was not able to pull up the mount, from a wound that she received the night before last. Fred Carrins, a man who was traveling with the widow, offered us the service of his mule to pull up the mount. By accepting his favor we got up the mountain very easily. After driving 15 miles, we camped on Shoal Creek with the intention of staying here until Monday.

Sunday, Sept. 30. The morning was very pleasant so I concluded to take a small excursion down the creek to see if I could discover anything. Everything seemed desolate and discouraging until I came to the creek, when all my imagina-

tion and wonder were aroused by one of the most sublime scenes that ever came before my eyes. In the first place, the water seemed to be as pure as ever came out of the ground, and was as clear as a crystal. Secondly, it broke over a natural dam of rock about four feet high. After rustling over the rocks, which broke its course some 20 feet, it made a perpendicular fall over a rock of about 15 feet. Down under this was a house—I suppose was built for a still, and from its appearance—I would not be surprised if there was rascality carried on at this place. From hereon down, as far as I examined it, the water ran almost unperceived under the large loose rock, which looked like a pile of ruins. About 12 o'clock Mrs. Tuner came up with her teams, and, having an extra mule, she proffered to lend it to us, so that we might drive off the mountain into the valley where provisions were plenty. Provisions were scarce where we were. After rolling out, a 7 mile drive brought us to the foot of the mountain at James Julian's place, where we found everything that could be wished for by a company of emigrants. Provisions were plenteous and as low as any we had bought previously.

October 1. This morning we found that our mare was still not able to travel. Some of us set out on a squirrel hunt while others struck out to buy some beef. As regards the squirrel hunt, we failed to kill any, but as far as the beef was concerned, we got plenty of good meat by paying $3\frac{1}{2}$ and 4¢ per pound for it. This morning an old gentleman by the name of Keller came down the mountain and said that he had some fine stock to sell. We told him to bring it down as we thought that he could sell it. In the evening he brought down three or four old, gray horses. His horses were one-eyed, crooked-legged, hip-shotten [worthless], and sway-backed, but the old man flattered himself that they were fine horses, so he priced them according to his own feelings. He went back satisfied that we did not think much of his stock. Next we tried to get some sweet potatoes to eat with our beef. Some of the boys struck out over the mountain for that purpose. After walking about 10 miles, they landed back, with skinned feet and aching bones—without getting any potatoes.

Oct. 2. Today we stayed at Julian's. It rained occasionally consequently we did nothing but lay in tents and wagons.

Oct. 3. This morning it was still raining, and we put off starting until tomorrow. At about 12 Jim McCarty and Bordin passed us. Late that evening a train of movers from Cobb County, Georgia passed us on their way to Smith County, Texas. The company consisted of 100 people, white and black, and 17 wagons.

Oct. 4. This morning it was still raining, but by twelve it looked like it was clearing off. We rolled out and traveled about 5 miles and camped in a large swamp. The country that we traveled over this evening was surrounded almost entirely by mountains, but was some of the best land that I ever saw. It was heavily timbered and mostly low land.

Oct. 5. This morning we continued our journey and found a very rough road. It is a swampy area with the road made with a causeway [a raised roadway]. A 15 mile drive brought us to Somerville, Alabama, situated on the side of a hill, having for its foundation almost a solid limestone rock. There was nothing grand about this place. It is nothing more than a cotton-country village. The most complete building that I saw was the jail, which is a large brick house picketted in with posts 12 feet high, and has an iron cage in the side of the wall. From the appearance of the inhabitants, I would think that it was just such a house as was needed in that place. After driving 20 miles we camped for the night at the White Oak Springs.

Oct. 6. This morning found us on the road again. Four miles travel brought us off a very rough mountain called Limestone Mountain. Once off the mountain we found fine roads through beautiful cotton country. In the evening we came to Decatur, Alabama, situated on the south side of the Tennessee River. Decatur seems to have been a very busy place at some past time, but it is on the decline at this time. The most beautiful sight was when I came in sight of the railroad bridge across the river at Decatur. Just as I was viewing the bridge the passenger car entered it and passed through. We halted in Decatur a few minutes and a tremendous rain fell for about 15 minutes. Today we drove about 15 miles and camped a mile west of Decatur in a small glade.

Oct. 7. This morning we rolled out again without much trouble and found beautiful roads but a scarcity of water. Late in the evening we came to a nice little village called Courtland, situated on the Stephenson and Memphis Railroad. After driving 20 miles we camped about one mile west of Courtland.

Oct. 8. This morning we continued our journey and found some very good roads and fine country, but the water is neither plentiful nor good. About noon we came to a small railroad town called Leighton. After traveling 23 miles over a wealthy portion of Alabama, we camped about one mile east of Tuscumbia.

Oct. 9. This morning we geared up and started our journey. After about a mile, we came to Tuscumbia, which is a very old place, built in the old style. The fairgrounds at Tuscumbia were beautifully situated on a small creek west of the town. We had tolerable good roads today, but by being bothered with the [railroad] cars we drove only 12 miles.

Oct. 10. This morning we were on the road again, and 7 miles of travel brought us to Buzzard Roost, where we bought some feed for our stock. We continued our journey over broken country and took dinner at Thompson's toll bridge on Bear River [Creek]. This evening we had a very hilly road to travel. We crossed the line out of Alabama into Mississippi. After driving 20 miles we camped for the night on Cripple Deer Creek.

Oct. 11. We rolled on towards Jacinto, Mississippi this morning. Late in the evening we came to Jacinto and found the roads to be very rough and hilly. We passed but few houses today, and found feed and water to be very scarce. After driving about 20 miles we camped 3 miles west of Jacinto at a spring that does not run—made by sinking a gum in a pond and calling it a spring.

Oct. 12. This morning found us on the road to Rienzi, and with 2 miles of travel we entered the Tuscumbia Swamp, which is about one mile across. We found, on the west side of the swamp, a fairgrounds, with the fair going on. We did not go into this fair, but I saw a great deal of their stock and it is very sorry. At this place they are at work on the Mobile and

Ohio Railroad, and the cars will be running at this place by Christmas. A few hundred yards brought us to the town of Rienzi, which is a very flourishing little place. We continued until evening and crossed another turnpike over Hatchey Swamp, which is about one mile in length. After driving over 23 miles of rough road, we camped for the night on Ten-mile Creek.

Oct. 13. After a few miles we came to a beautiful little place called Ripley. Today we traveled about 20 miles and pitched our tent on Tippak Creek with the intention of staying until Monday.

Sunday Oct. 14. Today we enjoyed ourselves by gathering grapes, muscadines, hazelnuts, and chestnuts.

October 15. This morning we continued our journey and after traveling 11 miles we came to a small country place called Salem. We drove 21 miles over hilly, sandy, dry country.

Oct. 16. After traveling 5 miles we reached Holly Springs, Mississippi. This is a considerable place built upon a city style and has some splendid buildings that would compare favorably with most any place in the United States. The state fair commenced this morning and the streets were crowded with people, horses, buggies, omnibuses, and cotton wagons. We drove 18 miles.

Oct. 17. We drove toward the Mississippi River. First, we passed through a small place called Wall Hill, and about 5 miles distant, we passed through Buck-Snort. We drove 18 miles today.

Oct. 18. This morning we traveled early and passed through a small place called Taitesville. We traveled today in Coldwater bottom, and found the roads to be very good. We crossed Coldwater at Mathew's Ferry. After driving 25 miles we camped for the night on the west side of Coldwater River.

Oct. 19. We rolled out tolerably early this morning, because we had to drive in the swamps. We crossed Black Walnut Bay at Mathew's Bridge. After driving 15 miles through the

swamp, on a very rough, but not muddy road, we camped for the night on the bank of Lake Flour.

Oct. 20. This morning we got up to see a lake afloat with ducks and white cranes. Ned Simmons killed 2 ducks at one shot. Just as breakfast was over, 3 strangers came up, who said they had nothing to eat, nor money to buy anything. We divided what little we had with them and rolled out again for Helena. After traveling a few miles, we approached the Mississippi River, almost the king of all rivers, the second largest in the world; it is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles across at Helena. The first steamboat we saw was the "Belfast." We crossed the river in a steam ferryboat and reached Helena, Arkansas, which was a nice little town. We drove 20 miles today.

Oct. 21. Today we got a late start, drove 18 miles through the swamp, and pitched our tent near a gum spring that tasted very strongly of copperas [copper].

Oct. 22. We had a beautiful road all day. We drove about 20 miles and pitched our tent on Lake Pleasant with the intention of trying to get quarters to winter in Arkansas, as the reports from Texas are that people cannot get bread to eat in that state.

October 23—November 2 [a period of 11 days]. We were situated on Lake Pleasant as above stated. We had a fine time in riding upon the lake as we were shooting ducks, squirrels, water-turkeys, and wild turkeys. This lake is about 12 miles long at this time and 100 yards across, but in the winter season, I learned that the White River overflows and a part of its current runs into this lake. On the opposite side of the lake, it is almost a solid canebreak from the lake to the White River. In this wilderness, so the people tell me, there are turkey, deer, panthers, and bears in great abundance besides the great amount of other smaller game that an old hunter would not notice. We saw none of these animals, but as for turkeys, we killed 3 and saw several more. The surrounding country about this lake is very wealthy—the land is good. The corn and cotton is very good this season, but water and health are very bad.

Nov. 3. We rolled out from Pleasant Lake. We had tried to rent houses from everyone in this country but failed to get them. Several miles travel brought us to Clarendon, situated on the east side of White River. It is a low and filthy little place, and I understand, that in the time of the overflow, it is all covered with water. They have had a disease that is similar to the cold plague, which has carried a great many of them over to Davy Jones [death]. We crossed White River at this place and found a tremendously muddy road from the river to Rock Roe Bayou. After driving 12 miles, we camped for the night on the west bank of the bayou.

Nov. 4. After three miles on the road, we reached the edge of Grand Prairie, where we were to find a farm belonging to James Moore, a man with whom we made contact while staying at Pleasant Lake. We were to make a contract with him to build him a couple of houses, so that we might stay in them until spring. After we reached the farm, upon inquiry, we found that the farm did not belong to Mr. Moore and also found it contrary to what he represented it. Being disappointed by not getting any houses, we all set a firm resolution to roll on to Texas and risk the consequences. Before us lay a plain that extended as far as a man's eye would let him see. We saw nothing else the balance of the day except fire out on the prairie which is a common thing this season of the year. After driving 16 miles we camped for the night on a ravine.

Nov. 5. This morning found us on the road again and we saw nothing but a few deer and prairie hawks skimming over the prairie. We met a couple of men who were after a man who had stolen a horse a few miles from Brownsville. In the evening we passed through Brownsville, a small town situated upon the western side of the prairie. After driving 16 miles, we camped for the night on the edge of the prairie.

Nov. 6. We were on the road again and found a very muddy road all day. We drove 20 miles and camped on the east bank of the Arkansas River in sight of Little Rock.

Nov. 7. This morning we crossed the river and found 5 steamboats, lying at the wharf, which came up the river in

the spring. The waters got so low they could not run. We found a drove of 1400 head of sheep from Missouri on their way to Texas. I found Little Rock to be a very nice place. There are some fine buildings and a great many business houses. We had a very rough road and a cold rain all day. After driving 20 miles we camped for the night on Hurricane Creek.

Nov. 8. The road was very wet and muddy. After a few miles drive, we reached a small place called Benton, which seemed to be a very nice little town, though of recent origin. We crossed Salem River and had a very rough road. After traveling 20 miles we camped for the night on a small creek.

Nov. 9. Today we had a hilly road, and before noon we came to a streak of country that had just been visited by a tremendous tornado that tore all the timber up by the roots. We passed in sight of Rockport, a small town situated on the Wachita River. After driving 22 miles, we camped on the banks of the Wachita River.

Nov. 10. This morning found us on the road again. We got along tolerably well until evening when "Sterl" [Sterling] stepped out of the wagon to a rock and put his ankle out of place. We traveled 20 miles.

Nov. 11. We had a very rough road over piney hills all day. Our stock was very stupid today, and we pitched our tent before night on the bank of the Antoine River. Today we drove 18 miles.

Nov. 12. We first passed through a little place called Antoine. We had a very good road and got along fine. After driving 19 miles, we camped for the night on a creek half a mile from Murfreesboro.

Nov. 13. We passed through Murfreesboro, a little, one-horse town. With two miles of travel we crossed the Little Missouri River, and we had a very steep hill to pull, after which we had a very good road the balance of the day. Late this evening we came to Center Point, which has some very good buildings, but scattered too much to make a nice place. After traveling 18 miles, we camped one mile west of Center Point.

Nov. 14. About daybreak, a thunder cloud came up, and it rained a very hard shower. After the rain ceased, we rolled out again, and had a very hilly road until we struck Salem bottom, which was very muddy. After we cross the Salem River, we came to a salt lake, where were some old salt works. We drove 20 miles today and camped on the prairie hills on the farm of Sam Henry, who was an old friend and acquaintance.

Nov. 15. We concluded this morning to lay over and rest our stock. It set to raining this morning and rained all day. We moved our women and children into a large shop, where they rested very comfortably. The balance of us stayed in the wagons.

Nov. 16. This morning we bade our friends farewell with a promise that they would be in Texas before long. Within two miles we struck Little River bottom and found it very muddy. We crossed the river at Mill's Ferry. Mills is a man who has neither heart, soul, nor gizzard. He felled trees and stopped up a very good ford and ferries his neighbors free gratis in order to charge movers a high price for crossing in an old decayed boat. After we got out of the bottom, we had a very good road the balance of the day. We drove 15 miles.

Nov. 17. This morning we had a fine road. Within about 7 miles, we came to a little place called Rocky Comfort. It is composed of a grocery store stand, and a horse mill. Two miles from Rocky Comfort we came to the line of the Choctaw Nation [Oklahoma] and here found a squad of Choctaws who seemed to be in a desolate condition. I saw several large, robust Indians who had nothing in the world but blow guns and the britch clout [breechcloth] they wore. This evening we struck the bottom prairie and had mud up to the axel tree for about 7 miles. After driving 15 miles, we camped for the night on the Jones farm, one of the largest and richest farms I had ever seen.

Sunday Nov. 18. We traveled 6 miles through the Red River bottoms. We crossed the Red River at Boice's Ferry, [entered Texas], and had fine roads the balance of the day. After driving 17 miles, we camped on a farm belonging to a man by the name of Pope.

Nov. 19. We reached the prairie, which is made up of what they call black waxy land. When wet it is awful to stick but when dry it is hard as limestone. We traveled very well and passed through Clarksville, a very nice little village. After driving 22 miles, we camped 3 miles west of Clarksville.

Nov. 20. We continued our journey through the prairie and had very good roads. We saw a great deal of fine land. After driving 20 miles we camped on a creek with the expectation of having a rough night.

Nov. 21. This morning we rolled out again after having a cold night. After 8 miles we came to the town of Paris, a beautiful town situated on a large prairie. We found upon inquiry that we had to go 20 miles further before we can find wood and water. We had a fine road over the prairie and night came and still we could see no timber ahead. We drove until about 2 hours into the night before coming to a house, where we bought wood to cook our suppers. We drove 30 miles today. [This was the longest day's journey on the trip.]

Nov. 22. Upon waking this morning we found the rain pouring down and the wind blowing. There was no wood to make a fire. We fed our stock and rolled out for the timber without eating any breakfast. One mile brought up to a little place called Honey Grove. After another 4 miles, we came to a small shirt of timber where we pitched our tent until tomorrow. [This was the last entry in the diary.]

The caravan reached Grayson County, Texas, on Sunday, November 25, 1860, after a journey of slightly more than two months which covered approximately 900 miles. The family had gone west to find peace and land. While the clouds of war soon engulfed them in their now distant dwelling place, some found peace sooner than others.

Margaret Eveline Cowan Camp, the paralyzed mother, died June 1, 1861, and is buried near Denison, Texas in a family cemetery. Nearby is interred Joseph Camp, the boy-diarist, who died of fever March 23, 1862. Life was taken from him shortly after arriving in Texas and just two days after he became a man (March 21, 1841—March 23, 1862). William,

the patriarch of the migration, died December 3, 1866. He was buried along side his wife. He had been born November 16, 1809, and was 57 at the time of death.

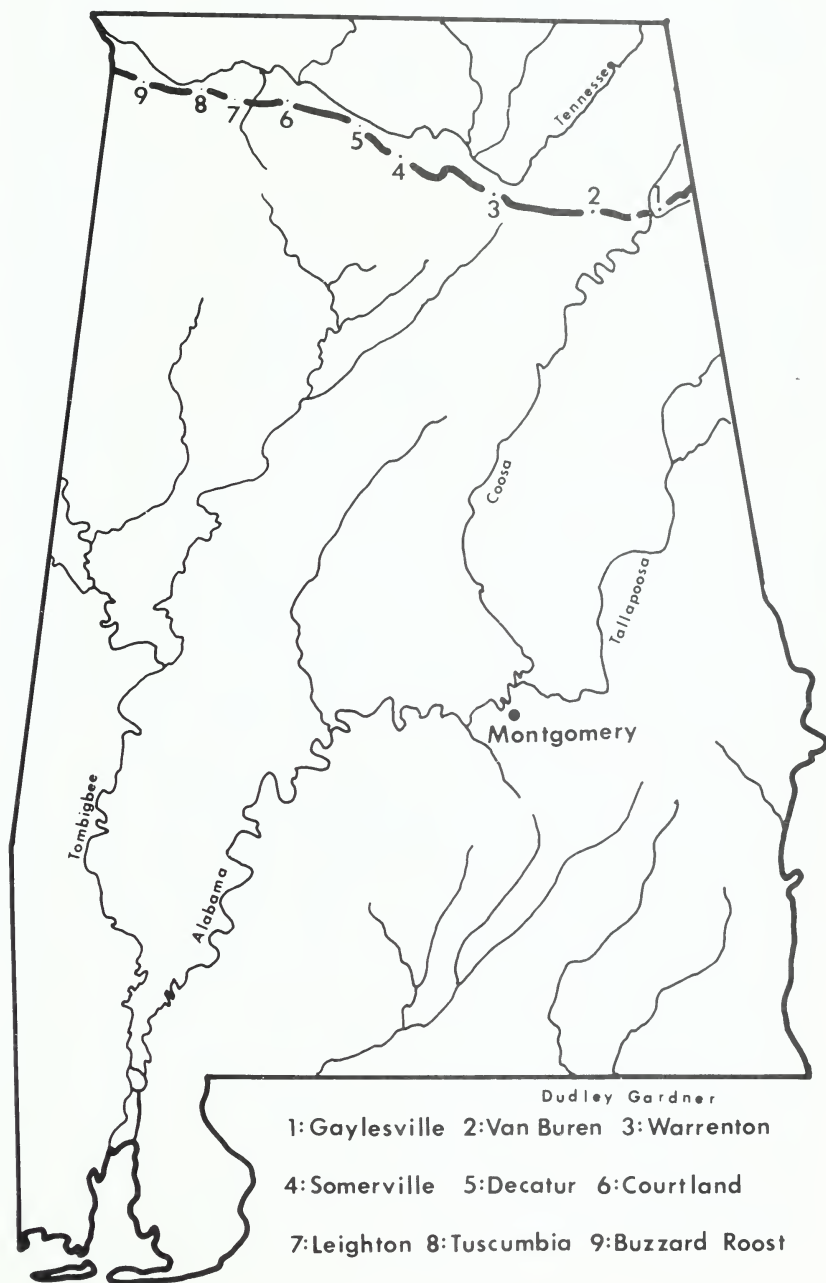
While the family had made the journey to avoid the uncertainties of "the impending crisis" of the Civil War, John Lee Camp enlisted in Captain Jim Wood's Cavalry Company (Confederate) at Sherman, Texas in February, 1862. He was honorably discharged at Melissa, Texas, May 24, 1865. Later he married Jamima Lay on March 19, 1866. A fellow traveler on the great trek, Jamima bore him four children.

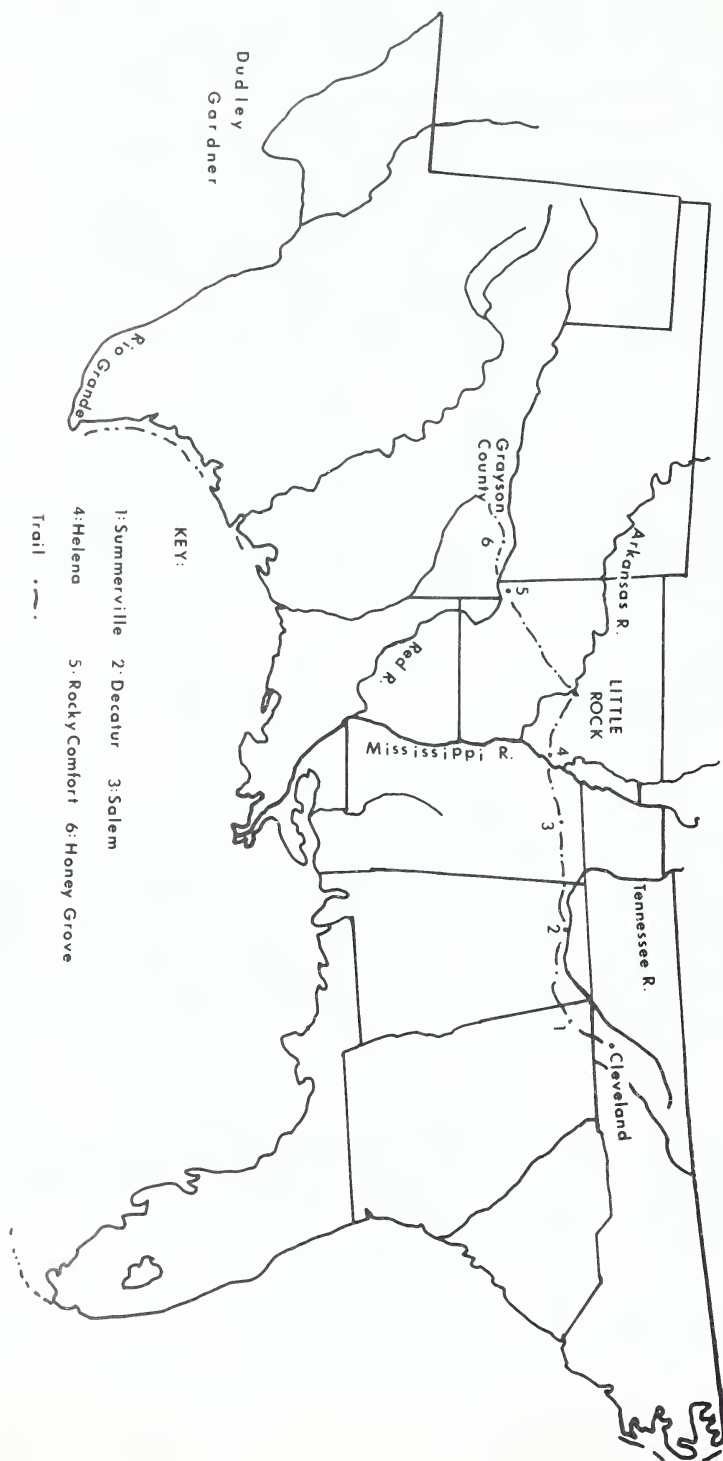
Archibald Camp became a cowboy and made trail rides into Mexico, and eventually died in Mexico City. John Camp became a farmer and orchard keeper. He helped build the first school, known as the South Gale School, on the corner of his land. A number of the family's children attended this school, which was disbanded in 1952. John died May 18, 1931, at age 92.

Margaret married Jack McKnight, a druggist in Savoy, Texas. Later they removed to Dalton, Georgia, where she died in 1922.

After Sterling Camp served in the Confederate Army, he married Nancy Caroline Henry (of Blount County, Tennessee). The couple moved to near Bowie, Montague County, Texas, where they had seven children and spent the remainder of their lives. Sterling died September 26, 1919, and was followed in death by Caroline on August 2, 1924. They are buried in Oak Hill Cemetery on land taken from the corner of their property.

A copy of the diary was furnished by Mrs. Arthur Morgan Foster, Box 1296, Bristow, Oklahoma, 74010, who would be pleased to learn additional information about the Camp and Cowan families.





TO TUSCALOOSA AND BEYOND:
A UNION CAVALRY RAIDER IN ALABAMA,
MARCH-APRIL 1865

Edited by Edward G. Longacre

For four weeks during the spring of 1865 Alabama and western Georgia became the setting for the largest and tactically the most successful mounted operation in American military history. During that period some 13,500 cavalry, mounted infantry, and horse artillery under Brevet Major General James Harrison Wilson marched an average of 525 miles across hitherto unscathed Confederate territory, stamping out the last vestiges of resistance in the Deep South. On the expedition this huge, highly mobile command—a forerunner of the Panzer battalions of World War II—captured five fortified cities including Selma and Montgomery, plus 60,000 prisoners, 320 cannon and 100,000 stands of small arms, while destroying dozens of factories, foundries, arsenals, and other sources of supply for the Confederate armies. Cut off from communication with the major theaters of operations farther north, Wilson did not end his journey until arriving at Macon, Georgia, on April 20—almost two weeks after Lee surrendered to Grant in Virginia.

The most significant factor in the raid's unparalleled success was a side expedition conducted against the Tuscaloosa vicinity by 1800 horsemen under one of Wilson's subordinates, Brigadier General John T. Croxton of Kentucky. Having started from Gravelly Springs, Alabama on March 22 in Wilson's main column, Croxton's small brigade was detached for its special mission on the 30th, shortly after the command reached Elyton (now Birmingham). In addition to destroying the military utility of Tuscaloosa, including the University of Alabama—then serving as an academy for Confederate officers—Croxton was directed to lead astray any troops pursuing the main force. These included troopers from the command of Lieutenant General Nathan Bedford Forrest, the Confederate "Wizard of the Saddle," who were straining to stop Wilson short of Selma, his first major objective.

The 28-year-old Croxton did his job extremely well, sacking

Tuscaloosa, then blocking the path of a cavalry division under Brigadier General William H. Jackson and preventing it from menacing Wilson. Marching and countermarching in order to distract Jackson and to avoid a pitched battle against his larger force, Croxton's three regiments covered more ground than Wilson's main body. All told, the Brigade made a 653-mile circuit of central and eastern Alabama, passing through villages including Trion, Jasper, Talladega, Munford, Blue Mountain and Jacksonville, and tearing up a great deal of railroad track, before rejoining its comrades at Macon on April 29. Wilson welcomed the prodigal brigade with great glee, praising them and their young leader for their substantial contributions to the success of the expedition as a whole.

In the following letter, written two months after the raid and here published for the first time, one of Croxton's troopers provides the most detailed first-person account of this side-expedition ever brought to light. The writer, Charles Wooster of Company G, 2nd Michigan Volunteer Cavalry, a 22-year-old native of Hillsdale County, Michigan, had been a veteran of mounted service since the tender age of 18. Following the war, the young man would return to his home region to attend college and teach school, before moving to Nebraska to forge careers in farming, journalism, and politics. By the time of his death in 1922, Wooster would be remembered as an influential newspaper editor and owner and as a Nebraska state legislator.

Private Wooster's letter is part of a large collection of his correspondence, diaries, manuscripts, newspaper clippings, and miscellaneous material reposing in the Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln. The editor has left intact most of Wooster's eccentricities of spelling and syntax; only paragraphing and essential punctuation have been added.

* * *

Macon Ga. June 25th '65

Brother John,

It has been my intention to write you a good long letter

and tell you all about the great cavalry raid in Ala. and Ga.; but it seemed like such a task that I kept waiting for a good opportunity and a time when I should feel just like writing. Of course neither of them came, and now I have concluded to wait no longer but to go to work and write a few things for your special benefit, and such as are not likely to be published in the papers.

It is always tiresome for me to write details, and in fact it is very seldom that I do it. I[t] seems to me as though I could never learn to compose so that I could sit down and write for three or four hours at a time, and enjoy it; and this is one reason why I wish to learn Phonography so that I can write as fast as I can think, and as I feel here very much of the time I don't think it would require a bit *over* 200 words in a minute, the number which a first class reporter is suppose to be able to write.

But if I remember rightly I proposed to tell you a little story, and so I will begin.

On the 21st & 22d of March Gen. Wilson's Cavalry Corps, M. D. M.—Military Division of The Miss[issipp]i—which had, since the expulsion of [Confederate General John Bell] Hood from Tenn., been preparing at Waterloo and Gravelly Springs, for a campaign, marched from Chickasaw Ala. [just below the Tennessee River from Gravelly Springs] in a Southerly direction. This corps was composed of the 1st, 2d and 4th divisions under the command of Generals [Edward M.] McCook, [Eli] Long and [Emory] Upton, respectively, and numbering about 18000 thousand [sic] men.

The command kept together until it reached Elyton, a little town situated in a rich valey east of Black Warrior [River]. We made very good time, but could have done much better if it had not been for the waggon train, which hindered us one day so that the column made only five miles; and towards night the entire 2d Mich. was dismounted to help it through a succession of mud holes. No rebels were met in force but quite a number of officers and soldiers who were scattered about the country conscripting were picked up. I was a little surprised at our not being bushwhacked; but in all the cam-

paign I do not remember of a single instance of it.

We expected that after the first two days march from Chickasaw we would be in a rich country where plenty of forage could be found for our horses, and plenty of ham, potatoes &c for ourselves; but in this we were much mistaken. With one or two unworthy exceptions the soil is very poor and much broken. A great deal of the land is untillable, and almost invariably covered with a light growth of oak and pine. The pine is not generally large enough to saw, though in some place[s] very fine trees are found, but [they] would not probably make good lumber, except for rough work, as they are what is called Pitch, or Yellow pine and very hard when dry.

The people wear homespun and are gennerally quite ignorant; so much so that they often took our men for rebels, not acting as though they had ever heard of such a thing as a U. S. uniform. One day as we had halted near a house and were feeding the band began to play, when an old man came running up from the fields in a great fright, probably thinking that some horrid thing from the infernal regions had appeared on earth. As soon as he became a little cool, in answer to inquiries, he stated that he had never heard a band before and didn't know what it was.

Crossing the Black Warrior would have been quite an interesting proceeding to one not accustomed to such things. The ford was quite deep and very rough, [and] the current being rapid a number of horses and mules were carried down stream and lost; their riders gennerally succeeded in getting out, though I think that from the whole command several were drowned. One old rack [wreck] of a horse fell in the middle of the stream with an Irishman belonging to our company; after a short struggle he succeeded in loosing himself from his horse, and catching another which was passing, by the tail was enabled to reach the opposite bank. He was no swimmer and was considerably frightened; in passing a deep place he was drawn under, but kept fast to his escort, and on coming to the air again he cried out lustily: "O, be jasus! I'm drowned now! I'm drowned now!" The boys afterward made much sport of him, as he was one of those persons who don't believe they will die till their time comes; besides, an

old witch had told him that he would never be drowned, which he had great confidence in.

At Elyton our brigade—Croxton's, 1st [Brigade, First Division, Cavalry Corps, M. D. M.]—was sent in the direction of Tuskaloosa to take the attention of Gen. Forrest, who was known to be in that vicinity, while our main force under Wilson crossed a range of hills to the east and running paralell with our line of march, with the intention of outmarching Forrest and getting into Selma before him. When about 20 mi. from Tuskallosa we ran [a]foul of the rebel Gen. Jackson with two divisions [sic] of cavalry. As it was about night we halted, went into camp and laid [over] till morning, neither party seeming to desire a fight that evening.

As soon as it was daylight (April 1st) the men were in their saddles and were moving away, but were not quick enough for Jackson; for during the night he had formed his lines around our camp, by the light of our fires, was up as early as we, and [was] moving to the attack. It was not Croxton's policy to fight and therefore he drew off in the direction of the Black Warrior river, which he reached the same day at a point about 30 mi. above Tuskaloosa. Jackson folowed us till about noon and then left us, probably turning his attention to Wilson. In this encounter we lost several men from the 6th Ky. [Cavalry].

We recros[sed] the Black Warrior [to the northwest, before turning again south]. It being unfordable, and having but one little ferry boat, we were obliged to cros our equipments in it and to swim our horses. This was a novel sight. The horses were stript of everything, even to their halters, driven down to the water like sheep and pushed in one after the other and sometimes on top of one another; the[y] would go over . . . and once started they would continue crossing all day, providing they were kept well "closed up."

The command being all over and having a good nights reast it starts for Tuscaloosa. When within ten miles of there we stop and feed and wait for dark. In the meantime the Gen. send out a scout and captures a man who has that day been in town; he reports 500 men there, and also that there was nothing

known of our being in the vicinity. As soon as it is fairly dark the column advances; the Moon is soon up, the road is good and we have a splended ride.

On arriving with[in] about a mile of town a halt is made, and parties are sent out to reconoiter. All being in readiness the column again moves forward. As it nears the town another halt is made and the 2d Mich is dismounted, that being in the advance. The Gen. decides to capture the guard at the bridge [over the Black Warrior, northwest of the city] alive, if possible, and for that purpose two volunteers are called for from Co. G.; myself and one other thinking we would try our hand, divest ourselves of all superfluous equipments which might impede our movements, leave our guns and each with a revolver in his hand and a negro to guide us, we start for the bridge, folowed by good support within hearing distance.

We strike the river first and then move cautiously down; being within about thirty feet from the entrance of the bridge, we hear the guard slowly walking out. As he steps into the light he looks down on us and quickly chalenges: "Who's there?" "Friends!" I reply, but he couldn't "see it," and instantly fired; the ball passed through the crown of my hat, and he beat a hasty retreat through the bridge, folowed by our balls; as our support was up the birdge was cleared, and the man who first fired on us left mortally wounded near its center;—ther were 14 rebels in the bridge, in all. The regiment quickly pass through, and with the assistance of a guide take the rebel artillery—two guns—before they could get their horses harnessed. There was some pretty sharp firing, but we were so fortunate as to lose only two killed and some few wounded.

After our boys had got well in town the 6th Ky. band came up and played "[Ain't I Glad to] Get out of The Wilderness" for the benefit of the Johnnies; they were not slow in taking the hint and the next morning none were to be seen, except a few which we held as prisoners.

A weding party was in the hight of its glory, when the Blue Coats rudely entered, arrested the bridegroom, who was a Capt. in the rebel army [Captain James S. Carpenter of Kentucky], and others of the gay cavaliers; the female part of

the company [including the bride, Miss Emily Leach of Tuscaloosa] was in great terror—the scene had sadly and suddenly changed. I *do believe* it is a *sin*, and a *disgrace* to the Yankee nation, that such proceedings are tolerated.

As soon as the bridge was take[n] I was sent back to carry word of our success, and to get my gun, having done which I mounted my horse with the intention of returning to the regiment. As I was nearing the bridge at a brisk pace, about fifty dismounted men appeared, coming up on a cross street; taking them to be our own boys I kept on and only discovered my mistake when they were quite near me. An old chap who seemed to be their leader advanced a pace or two and the following colloquy ensued; in the meantime those about him kept edging their way towards me, with their guns in their hands, and in the dim Moonlight peering curiously at me.

Old Chap: What's the news?

Myself: I understand there are a lot of Yankees out here a little way.

Old Chap: I suppose you are one of our men?

Myself: *Certainly* I am.

Old Chap: What road are they on?—

I don't answer promptly, not knowing the names of the roads and thinking perhaps he would continue . . . [when] the report of a gun is heard at the bridge, they turn their heads, giving me an opportunity of taking a French Leave, which I of course was not slow in improving. The occasion of the guns being fired was that some of the Johnnies, turning their attention from me, went towards the bridge; one of the[m] seeing a man standing there, thus accosted him: Oh guard! . . . why didn't you answer me when I called you?"

. . . . Replied the guard—throw down that gun!

I'll show you how I'll throw it down! returned the reb, at the same time preparing to fire; but the Yank—for such it

was—was to[o] quick for him—he dropped both his gun and himself.

During the night only part of the town was occupied by our troops; but as soon as daylight came the whole command was moved over and posted on the principal streets leading into the place, where they remained till the next morning [April 5]. In the interval all stores, government houses &c, were given up to indiscriminate plunder; but I heard of no private dwelling houses being disturbed. Nigger[s] of all sorts and sizes and poor whites could be seen from morning till night carrying away all manner of dry goods and provisions; salt, which was very scarce among the common people, and which could not be bought by them except with silver, was especially sought, and I think most of them obtained a supply. Safes were broke open by soldiers in search of money and valuables. Confederate scrip was flush and every nigger had his pockets stuffed full of it. I heard of one or [more] heavy hauls of gold being made, but such instances must have been very rare, for those having the precious metal took good care to hide it—knowing the prevailing passion of the Yankees.

Early on the morning of Apr. 5th the command was in motion, recrossed the river and burned the bridge, having previously burned the Military Institute [the University], a large cotton factory, a foundery, two large tanneries, a hat factory &c. After seeing all these things were done, we marched fifteen miles to the [south]westward and camped for the night.

Then came the hardest days march I think I ever made. We started shortly after daylight, marched nearly to Vienna, turned back and did not go into camp till well onto twelve o'clock P.M.; it had rained almost incessantly, the mud was very deep, and besides all that the rebel Gen. [Wirt] Adams had been pitching into our rear during the entire afternoon [with his 1500-man mounted brigade]. The 6th Ky. was our rear-guard; they have behaved in a disgraceful manner, sometimes running [in]to each other, and those in the rear calling to those in advance of them to get out of the way, as the rebels were close upon them. Before night they succeeded in losing two ambulances for us, [over thirty casualties,] and their Major commanding [Major William H. Fidler, who

had been captured]; this encouraged the rebels so much that they pressed forward with more determination than ever, and it became necessary to check them. For this purpose the 2d Mich. was halted in line of battle [near the village of Romulus] and effectually did the work assigned them. As the brave boys of the 6th were going back past us they would call out to each other saying: "We are all right now, the 2d Mich. is here!"

The Johnys advanced on us three different times; the flashes of their guns, in the darkness, often seemed to commingle with our own. They found that the programe had been changed and gave up their undertaking as a bad job. One reb, who had probably overheard the Kentucks, was heard to exclaim: "O God, we've got them 2d Michigans to fight again!"—they knew the regiment of old. After this slight protest on our part, they gave us no more trouble.

The morning of the 9th found us on one of the plantations of John W. P.¹—he owned seven—who lived 13 mi. from Tuscaloosa, on the Decatur road. The day before our arrival at this place, four of our men had taken \$500.00 in silver from Mr. P., which was recovered for him on his reporting the fact to the Gen., and the greater part of which he expended in buying Confederate money of the boys at the rate of one [silver] dollar for one hundred; he intended to use it in paying his taxes. Wonder what he thinks of his investment by this time?

Mr. P. owned over 600 slaves, was very miserly, and was supposed to have several thousand dollars of gold "salted down" in some secure place. Being an Infidel he would not allow his negroes to attend church, nor even to sing and pray in their cabins if he could prevent it; neither would he permit them to be married by a "Squire" or a preacher. Mr. P.'s wife was said to be often jealous of him, because of an undue intimacy on his part with two or three of his colored women. The negroes didn't seem to think the jealous altogether groundless, as there were a number of little mulattoes which strongly resembled their master and were thought by many to be his children.

¹The name has been deleted.

The evils of slavery on this plantation present themselves in a forcible manner, and though not equal to those portrayed in "Soliman Northrup" [David Wilson, ed., *Narrative of Solomon Northrup* (Buffalo, N. Y., 1853)] and "Uncle Tom's Cabin," are more nearly so than on any other I have hitherto visited. It was here that 200 negroes who had left their masters, mounted themselves on old horses, and dropped into our column, being a clog on our movements, [and] were started in a body without escort for Decatur; we afterwards heard that they had been scattered by guerillas, and it is very doubtful wheather any of them ever reached their destination.

Having left Mr. P.'s our course lay in the direction of Jasper [Croxtan having turned northeastward toward Georgia], passing which we turned in an Easterly direction, repaired a bridge over the Black Water, crossed, and continued our march to the Coosa [River], having passed the Sipsy [Sipsey], Mulberry and Little Warrior [forks of the Black Warrior River] by swimming our horses and rowing ourselves and baggage over in canoes. In crossing one of these rivers it was my fortune to have the boat capsize just as it was pushing out from shore, and having my carbine, sabre and 50 rounds of ammunition on my person I found it slightly inconvenient to keep my nose above water until I could get hold of a little sapling which was near by.

All along our march from Mr. P.'s to the Coosa we were continually passing paroled prisoners and stragglers belonging to Forrest's command; all agreed in saying that Forrest had recieved a terrible thrashing at and near Selma [shortly before and during April 2], they said they never saw men fight so like devils as Wilson's did, said they ran right over their works and them without even halting, and that in less than half an hour after our advance came in sight Selma was on fire. They were greatly *demoralized* and had no idea of again returning to the army.

During this part of our campaign it rained a large part of the time, making it very disagreeable marching, it sometimes happening that we didn't go into camp till 10 or 11 p. m. and then [with] supper to be got, tents pitched, horse[s] tended, bed[s] made &c—all in the rain. The people were

generally poor and it frequently required a little head work to get what we wanted to eat. The soil was very much like that I before described, and the timber the same, as a rule. On the Sipsy I observed some fine pine in considerable quantities, and thought a few enterprising Yankees might make a good fortune by erecting sawmills and rafting lumber towards the gulf.

The nicest little adventure I had on this trip happened one day while out with a scouting party. An old planter, having been told by one of his darkies that the Yankees were at a certain place not far distant, and being somewhat in doubt as to Sambo's veracity, concluded to go and see for himself; with this idea in his head he collected a few citizens, paroled prisoners &c, and set out, mounted on their best horses. Our party having halted at a house, it chanced that these Yankee hunters were nearing us on the same road. I, being in the advance, was first to see them as they were turning a short bend in the road; they suddenly checked their horses as I ordered them to halt, and doubtless thinking they had *found* the *Yankees*, as suddenly turned and fled, folowed by a shot from my carbine. My "war horse," not being slow on such occasions, was off after them like a whirlwind, but having seen so much service, was unable to overtake them, although not over 20 rd. [rods] distant. Having pursued them over a mile and a half he checked his course and gave up the chase. Such little incidents as this lend a charm to the soldiers life and are an offset to the monotony of camp life.

Arrived at the Coosa [April 21], it was but a short job to cross the command, [we] having been so fortunate as to capture a chain ferry, in running order. Our regiment was first over and went into camp untill the others had crossed. There it [was] we first heard of the surrender of Lee's army—Apr. 22; at first the report was discredited, but we soon found that it was on the authority of a Nashville paper which contained the official dispatches. This was good news for us of course, and no one hesitated in declaring the war at an end; but notwithstanding [that], the rebel Gen. [Benjamin J.] Hill next day had the impudence to place himself with about 500 men in our path [between Talladega and Blue Mountain, near present-day Anniston] and dispute our progress. The third

batallion of the 2nd Mich. was in the advance, and disposed of the Gen. in such a manner as not to stop our column, and, indeed, it some of the time had to move much faster in order to keep within supporting distance. The rebels would brake as often as they were charged, and they were charged as often as they stood. In two hours time they were scattered through the woods and none were to be found, many throwing away their arms as they ran. Two men of Co. E took their artillery—one piece—and eight men. Hill's entire command might have been captured by throwing a regiment on his flank and rear when the action commenced in the morning.

Co. B after the action was nearly over went back to bury one of their dead men [reportedly, the last soldier on either side to die in open combat during the war]² and thus got behind the column; in closing up they encountered a little squad of rebels in the village of Oxford, who had collected there after our rearguard had passed through. As they saw our boys coming up the[y] offered to surrender, taking them [Company B of the 2nd] to be the advance of a column; but discovering their mistake, one of them . . . failed in trying to make his escape, [and] was taken and disarmed. Shortly after he attempted to take a carbine from the hands of a soldier who had him in charge and in so doing received three bullets through his body; he stepped firmly aside, sat down,—the blood spirting from his mouth and nose in the meantime—and looking up at one who had shot him, taking him to be an officer, exclaimed, "O Lieut., see what you have done to me," and died. His wife, who happened to be in the place, together with other women, gathered about him uttering loud cries, and calling down the vengeance of a just God on the murderous Yankees.

That night the brigade camped at Blue Mountain, the Northern terminus of the railroad from Talledega [the Alabama and Tennessee Rivers Railroad], having marched 25 mi., destroyed the depot at the latter place, and those at other stations along the road; also, two large founderies, one of which was said by the owner to have been the largest in the United States afternoon.

²Rex Miller, *Croxtan's Raid* (Fort Collins, Colo., 1979) p. 80-81.

[the Chocologco Iron Works, outside Talladega]. But what do you think pleased the boys more than anything else? Whiskey, of course, which was found in abundance during the

The country in the vicinity of Talledega [is] rich and the planters live in large houses. Wilson's raid was the theme of conversation among the people and was conceded to be the most destructive one of the war. There was a rumor among them to the effect that Lee had defeated Grant, inflicting on him a loss of 60,000 men, with a proportionate amount of artillery, wagons, &c.; and also that Johnson [General Joseph E. Johnston] had given [General William T.] Sherman a similar drubbing, but I don't beleive they were fools enough to take stock in such reports; if they were, they were doubtless soon convinced of their error.

Remaining at Blue Mountain but one night, the command, after destroying the depot and what quartermaster stores were there, early in the morning [of the 24th] took the back track to Oxford, arrived at which place it turned to the East, and the march was continued without anything occuring worthy of special mention until our arrival at a point 5 mis. from Newnan Ga. During this part of the march only two rivers of note were crossed,—the Tallapoosa and the Chattahoochie [Chattahoochee], the first by means of a bridge, and the second by that of a ferry.

Before entering Newnan a rebel Capt. passed through our lines bearing dispatches to Gen. Hill, who was folowing in our rear, informing him of the Armistace between Johnson and Sherman [signed on April 18]. The Capt. stopped in our camp, talked freely, and gave us all the latest news. Word was sent the Gen. [Croxtton] from Newnan that our march through that place would not be opposed. Orders were issued directing that all foraging, except by authorized persons, should cease, no more mules and horses were to be taken, all articles of clothing &c which had been taken from cititzens were to be thrown aside, and things immediately assumed a new aspect. Guards were stationed at a favorable point in the road, and in accordance with orders all negroes excepting one to each commissioned officer were taken from the column as it passed along and were left to shift for themselves, not being allowed to folow the command.

As the head of our column neared Newnan the band struck up one of our national airs, the boy[s] marched in splendid

order, not a man leaving the ranks, and the citizens were treated to a sight which they will long remember. We all enjoyed ourselves, every one feeling that we were on our last campaign and that it was nearly ended; that the object for which we had so long contended was nearly attained, that soon we should lay by our arms and return to our homes and to peaceful employments, each man his own master.

From Newnan we took the direct road [southeast] to Macon. The weather was fine, as it had been for some time past, there was but very little straggling, the rights of citizens were respected and everything went on well. Gen. Hill followed close in our rear, and from the fact of his having arrested some of our stragglers and sent them up to their command, he was termed our rear-guard. Soldiers from Johnson's army were almost continually passing us on the way to their homes. They generally felt well and seemed to be glad that the war was at an end, notwithstanding they had been unsuccessful; some of them were sullen enough and would pass along without looking up, or speaking unless spoken to.

The country was about as level as it is in Wheatland [Michigan] and was all tillable, very different from what we had been accustomed to on the greater part of our march. Roads were good, and for two or three days after leaving the Chattahoochie I noticed that a great deal of izing glass [is-inglass] was mixed with the sand so that it glittered under our horses feet like gold.

On the first day of May the brigade arrived at this place and went into camp. Wilson had been here about two weeks, and had heard nothing from our brigad[e], except through rebel sources, since it left him at Elyton. It was supposed that we had been cut to peices and that the remmenant of our force, if indeed there was anything left of it, had escaped to the Tennessee [River]; therefore they were all glad to see us back again. The principal force under Wilson marched about 450 miles, whereas we marched 750 [sic]. . . .

Charles.

AN 1858 VIEW ON HISTORICAL PRESERVATION
IN MOBILE

By

Jack D.L. Holmes, Ph.D.
Director, Louisiana Collection Series

The long-view of history often reveals that problems which beset us today have been faced by our forebears before. An illustration of this truism revolves around historical preservation. Although we of the twentieth century believe that it is our generation which first recognized the value of preserving our material and architectural past, the truth is that earlier generations also deplored the high price which "progress" has often demanded.

An editorial appearing in the *Mobile Weekly Advertiser* for Saturday, April 3, 1858, reads as an epitaph for "An Old Landmark Gone."

"One by one," the editor recalls, "the few remaining traces of our Spanish origin, the landmarks that serve to connect the past generation with the present, and to remind us of the manners, customs and styles of architecture of the original settlers, are being obliterated, and but a short time will elapse before there will not be left a single trace, and the history of the past will be obscured and merely traditional. There now stands, so we are credibly informed, not more than seven or eight buildings that were erected during the Spanish occupancy of Mobile, and one of the few has now been torn down to make way for the tide of improvement which moves so bravely on. These thoughts were suggested upon witnessing the demolition of an old house that stood on the south side of Conti street, a few doors above St. Emanuel street.

"It was erected in the beginning of the year 1811, by Dr. Rafael,¹ and was at that time one of the handsomest, if not

¹Presumably, Dr. Rafael Hidalgo (or Idalgo, Ydalgo, etc.), who held the post of "Practicante Mayor del Real Hospital de la Movila y encargado de la Botica del mismo" (Chief Medic Practitioner of the Royal Hospital of Mobile and Director of the Hospital Pharmacy). His service record and pay sheets are in Archivo General de Indias (Sevilla, Spain), Papeles procedentes de la Isla de Cuba, legajo 538-a.

the handsomest residence in the city. It was built partly of brick and partly of wood, the front plastered over in imitation of stone, one and a half stories high, and was for a number of years occupied as the residence of Dr. Rafael, surgeon of the garrison at Fort Charlotte. The foundation was laid in brick and cement, and so closely do the materials now adhere to each other that is with much difficulty that they can be broken apart in pieces small enough to be carted away. After the Territory passed into the hands of the United States government,² the house was purchased for a small sum, and has since been occupied as a fruit store, shoe store, and occasionally as a residence at a trifling rent. When erected it was in the outskirts of town.

"The old frame buildings on the two corners above, and that opposite the old Armory, were erected previously. From them some idea of the appearance of Mobile in 1811 may be formed.

"In the place of the one torn down, its present owner contemplated the erection of a two-story edifice, the lower part of which will be fitted up for stores, the upper part for residences, somewhat after the style of those on the opposite side of the street."

As swiftly as the Spanish dominion passed the reins of government to that of the United States, so, too, the older architecture fell into decay, not to be resurrected until innumerable buildings were lost forever. Surely, this experience has a lesson for us all. The time to push for historical preservation is while we still have something historical to preserve.

On June 16, 1797, Dr. Hidalgo purchased a lot cornering on St. Charles and Government Streets from Joseph Chastang. The lot measured 12 toises frontage by 20 toises depth and sold for \$20. See Mobile Probate Court Records, Translated Spanish Records, I, 195-196.

²American forces under General James Wilkinson followed U.S. orders that Mobile was part of the Louisiana Purchase and, therefore, was already American territory in 1813. On Wilkinson's mock-heroic capture of Fort Carlota from Spanish forces under Captain Cayetano Perez, see Jack D.L. Holmes, "The Mobile Gazette and the American Occupation of Mobile in 1813: A Lesson in Historical Detective Work," *Journal of the Alabama Academy of Science*, XLVII, No. 2 April, 1976), 79-86.

BOOK REVIEW

Jody Carlson, *George C. Wallace and the Politics of Powerlessness: The Wallace Campaigns for the Presidency, 1964-1976*. (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Book, 1981. Pp. xv, 331. \$22.95)

While this work is not the first to examine George C. Wallace and his politics, Jody Carlson's study apparently marks the first published attempt by a scholar to evaluate critically the Wallace movement in a comprehensive fashion. Toward this end she focuses upon Wallace's presidential campaigns between 1964 and 1976, employing quantitative tools and traditional research techniques. For each campaign she presents a historical narrative, a comparison of Wallace supporters with those of other candidates, and an analysis of Wallace's public messages. On the whole she does a creditable job in outlining the main contours of the campaigns, but certain problems mar the overall quality of the volume.

During the 1960's, Wallace emerged as the dominant political figure in Alabama and became prominent in regional and national politics as well. Over the course of two decades he captured the governorship of Alabama three times in his own right and guided the successful gubernatorial campaign of his wife in 1966. On the national level he was the effective spokesman of a fanatically loyal constituency that hovered near 20 percent of the American electorate for several years. Beginning in 1964, Wallace helped define the issues addressed in presidential elections and eventually other candidates began to echo him on issues such as law-and-order in 1968 and busing in 1972. In the process, emphasizes Carlson, the political spectrum shifted to the right, but the mantle of political legitimacy eluded Wallace. Ultimately, this respectability fell upon another Deep South governor, Jimmy Carter of Georgia, whose victory over Wallace in the Florida Democratic primary of 1976 helped catapult him into the White House.

Using attitudinal and demographic data gathered during each campaign, the author tests several theories to explain the Wallace constituency and presents a wealth of information regarding it and the American electorate in general. Although

the data base is at times inadequate for her purposes, especially in the 1972 analysis, Carlson offers a provocative interpretation. Those who supported Wallace, she argues, felt powerless to alter the growth of the federal government or change its policies, which to their way of thinking catered to the unreasonable demands of minorities, the poor, and special interests. By supporting Wallace they symbolically protested the course of public policy in the United States.

Besides the limitations of the data base, Carlson's failure to analyze Wallace with a discerning probe seriously undermines her work. She simply dismisses Wallace as a racist "opportunist" who "had little to offer" in the way of a positive program designed for the needs of his followers (pp. 277-78). Perhaps her assessment rings true for the man and his proposals at the national level, albeit the generalization primarily rests upon a meager examination of the governor's public pronouncements. Certainly at the state level the evidence points in another direction, indicating that social conservatism in matters of race cannot, by itself, account for Wallace's phenomenal political success. Other factors, including his personal moral rectitude, a progressive legislative program, and skillful attention to the many nuances of grass-roots politics won this southern folk-politician many ardent supporters. Unfortunately, Carlson's cursory review of Wallace's role in Alabama politics does not broaden her perspective of the governor, and her book suffers as a result.

This book will probably be widely read, since it deals with one of the most astute politicians of the twentieth century. To approach it with high expectations, however, is to invite disappointment. Besides the reservations already noted, the book is not entirely free of minor factual errors. Carlson asserts, for example, that as governor Wallace "placed all liquor stores under the auspices of a state system" (p. 68), and that as a presidential candidate in 1972 he almost threw the election into the House of Representatives (p.xi). Matters of organization and style may disconcert some readers as well. Still, if read with care, the volume will be useful to those who are interested in this controversial politician and the trans-regional movement he spearheaded.

James P. Cooper, Jr.
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Joseph G. Dawson III. *Army Generals and Reconstruction; Louisiana, 1862-1877*. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982. pp. xiii, 294.)

Reconstruction lasted longer in Louisiana than in any other state. For fifteen years, from 1862 to 1877, the state served as a laboratory for social experimentation and as a political arena for the national disagreements concerning the nature of Reconstruction. Of necessity, the vital role of insuring peace and stability during the period fell to the military. As its title makes clear, *Army Generals and Reconstruction* is a study of the role of the military in Reconstruction Louisiana.

The generals had a difficult problem. For one thing, the only previous experience the military had as an occupying force was in Mexico and the Mexican Cession after the Mexican War. That occupation had been brief and free of the controversies which dominated Reconstruction. Once established, a policy remained for the duration. In contrast, during and after the Civil War the generals had to adjust as Radicals, Moderates, and Conservatives defined and redefined the nature of Reconstruction and the status of the former Confederacy. As the political winds shifted, the generals gained or lost powers, responsibilities, and options. Stability was scarce in Reconstruction Louisiana.

Compounding the difficulty of rebuilding the state was the lack of consistent leadership from the generals. During the 1860s generals came and went with a frequency reminiscent of Mexico after independence. Seemingly every six months the command passed to a new man. Some of the generals tried to accommodate local sentiment, and others pursued a harsh line in the Radical mode. A few tried to strike a balance between the two. And of course the abilities of the various commanders were of different types and qualities.

Not only was Louisiana affected by inconsistency in Washington politicians and in its local commanders, but the state also endured the difficulty of reconstituting its political system without sure knowledge of what was expected and in the face of opposition from its own unreconstructed element. Finally the state began to achieve stability in the 1870s. By then

Northern apathy induced a reduction in the number of troops and the powers of the generals within the borders of the state. The final factor in the ending of Reconstruction in Louisiana was the pivotal role of the state in the election of 1876.

Despite the difficulties of the period, Reconstruction was not a disaster in Louisiana. According to Dawson, in an extremely complicated situation the generals consistently did as much as was possible, occasionally more. Admittedly, Louisiana might have been better served; there were errors made on all levels during the fifteen-year period. Nevertheless, the role of the generals was, on the whole, beneficial.

Dawson has provided a significant contribution to Reconstruction historiography. His treatment is balanced, scholarly, and highly readable. Although the general reader, especially in the South, might reject some of Dawson's conclusions, there can be little argument against the extensive documentation in *Army Generals and Reconstruction*. Both Dawson and the Louisiana State University Press deserve a commendation for the quality of their work.

STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA

J. Herschel Barnhill

Dwight D. Eisenhower and the School Desegregation Crisis, A Moderate Among Extremists. By James C. Duram. (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1981. xiv + 306 pp. Notes, bibliography, and index.) \$20.95 Cloth, \$9.95 Paper.

Monographs sometimes attempt to seduce the ingenuous with titles that imply more than a restricted exploration of arcane territory. Conversely, the scope of *Dwight D. Eisenhower and the School Desegregation Crisis* extends beyond the canvass suggested by its appellation. This volume does examine, at length, the Eisenhower administration's reaction to the school desegregation crisis, analyzing the president's responses to the first *Brown* decision, the Supreme Court's 1955 implementation ruling, southern intransigence, the Little Rock crisis, and the legislative struggles that culminated in the Civil Rights Acts of 1957 and 1960. To varying degrees, James Duram also illuminates several other components of the Eisenhower administration, including press relations, the hierarchy among

advisers, the president's assumptions about constitutional and political imperatives, and the distance between the public's image of "Ike" and his true self. In addition, an informative, legal history of segregated education in America from the 1849 *Roberts v. City of Boston* case to the judicial atmosphere of the early 1950s precedes discussion of the Warren Court.

Soon after the Supreme Court declared segregated schools unconstitutional, a reporter asked the president if he wished to counsel the South; Eisenhower replied, "Not in the slightest" (p. 110). Despite his public reticence, Eisenhower, asserts Duram, emphathized with the desire of black Americans to eradicate the injustice of segregation. The president privately told his press secretary, "I guess the only way you can realize exactly how they feel is to have a black skin for several weeks" (p. 112). Yet philosophical and political restraints prevented Eisenhower from expressing public approval of the *Brown* decision. The president, argues Duram, sincerely believed that to express publicly either agreement or disagreement with a Supreme Court ruling would create an unfortunate precedent, implying that the chief executive might not fully enforce judicial decisions he opposed. Moreover, Eisenhower's restricted view of the scope of federal powers, a preference for incremental progress on the local level over coercion, optimism about the influence of Southern moderates, and fear that a rejection of gradualism would stir destructive emotions formed a prophylactic against more forceful presidential stratagems. Although Duram acknowledges Eisenhower's gradualist approach to school desegregation proved modest in its effectiveness, the author implies that, given the complexity of the issues, alternative approaches may have fared no better. Certainly Eisenhower's devotion to the "middle way" (p. 54) never wavered.

Unfortunately, Duram's central thesis, Eisenhower was a moderate amid extremists, is flawed both empirically and theoretically. The author fails to define moderation and extremism with adequate clarity. Amorphous concepts spawn flaccid analysis. Given Eisenhower's own difficulties in comprehending Barry Goldwater's 1964 employment of the terms "moderation" and "extremism," one might have expected Duram to provide meaning for his terms within an acknowledged

ideological context. Instead, Duram implies that the presence of antagonists to the political left and right of Eisenhower and the president's own consistency provide evidence of moderation. As for the latter, Emerson properly viewed it, if adhered to without pragmatic leavening, as evidence of folly, rather than a moderation. And the former reveals more about Duram's positioning of the polarities than it does about the appropriateness of designating Eisenhower a centrist. In discussing the implementation of the *Brown* decision, Duram suggests that the NAACP and southern obstructionists were equally provocative:

. . . the middle ground between the NAACP and the southern states . . . was a plausible position . . . the real strength of the middle position came from . . . The decision of the Eisenhower administration to support a gradual approach to school desegregation . . . (p. 104).

Since within a few years militants demonstrated that black frustration extended well beyond the NAACP's agenda of grievances, Eisenhower and his chronicler may well have mistaken moderates for extremists. Subsequent history indicates that Eisenhower, influenced by J. Edgar Hoover, harbored unrealistic fears about the ability of Communists to exploit the civil rights movement.

Despite the preceding caveat, Duram is shrewd and insightful when analyzing phenomena other than the taxonomy of ideologies. His impressive research in the papers of the Eisenhower Presidential Library, government documents, oral history, and germane secondary sources allows Duram to provide seminal insights into the personalities, assumptions, and process of decision-making that shaped the Eisenhower administration. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. and other practitioners of Camelot historiography facilely dismiss Eisenhower as a political incompetent who occupied the fairways of indifference while presiding over a crusade of inactivity. In contrast, revisionists, led by Herbert Parmet and Charles Alexander, appalled by an imperial presidency that produced Vietnam and Watergate, too quickly genuflect before Eisenhower's restraint and caution. More fully than any previous historian, Duram acknowledges the nuances and complexities of the Eisenhower

personality and administration. *Dwight D. Eisenhower and the School Desegregation Crisis* suggests that many more monographs on specific aspects of the Eisenhower administration must precede sophisticated synthesis and definitive commentary about the era. As historians build on Duram's foundations, they will do well to emulate his high standards of scholarship.

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FROM THAT TERRIBLE FIELD: CIVIL WAR LETTERS OF JAMES M. WILLIAMS, TWENTY-FIRST ALABAMA INFANTRY VOLUNTEERS. Edited by John Kent Folmar (University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1981. Maps and Illustrations, Preface, Notes, and Index. Pp. xvi, 187) \$18.95.

The literary woods are full of volumes of Civil War letters and diaries that probably should never have been published. Many of them turgidly prove that the life of the average Civil War soldier was incredibly boring, as generations of scholars have learned. Nearly everyone who has attempted scholarly writing or editorial work in the Civil War period knows well the tedium of searching through the letters of common soldiers for some usable material.

To these hardy souls and other, the letters of Lieutenant Colonel James Madison Williams of the Twenty-first Alabama Infantry are a welcome respite. Written to his beloved wife Eliza Jane Rennison Williams (whom he affectionately called Lizzie) from October 1861 to May 1865, Williams' correspondence offers keen insight into the machinations of mid-level command problems in the Confederacy. Although Williams' primary service was in the defense of Mobile, he participated in the 1862 Shiloh-Corinth-Tupelo scenario and surrendered with Richard Taylor in May 1865.

Williams' letters bear little resemblance to the "Today we had dress parade" missives of soldiers in the lower ranks. He was literate and perceptive; so, apparently, was his wife

or else Williams would have not gone into such detail about military matters and other aspects of his Confederate service. Unlike many other spouses, Mrs. Williams was able to spend some time with her husband during the war, once spending seven months with him while he was at Oven Bluff on the lower Tombigbee. The length and frequency of his correspondence to her during their periods of wartime separation, as well as the fact that he sent for her whenever suitable quarters were available, indicate considerable marital affection.

Williams' otherwise exemplary career was marred by a court-martial for his conduct in the defense of Fort Powell during David Farragut's assault on the Mobile defenses in August 1864. Acquitted by a military court, Williams nevertheless endured considerable scorn from his superiors for some time following the incident before being restored to command in late 1864.

Professor John Kent Folmar has done an outstanding piece of editorial work. His notes are copious and lucid, conveniently located at the end of the book. The volume is also remarkably error free. Except for the inadvertent placing of Corinth in "northwestern" Mississippi (p. xiv) and a map which mysteriously locates Fort Henry in Kentucky (p. 44), few errors of any significance exist. The work is attractive, scholarly, and a credit to both its editor and the University of Alabama Press. Civil War buffs and scholars should welcome its publication.

Frank Allen Dennis

Delta State University

Melton A. McLaurin and Michael V. Thomason. *The Image of Progress: Alabama Photographs, 1872-1917*. (University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1980). pp. 220, Preface, Introduction, Bibliography, Index. \$19.95.

The Image of Progress is a work of considerable value. Melton A. McLaurin and Michael V. Thomason have assembled over two hundred photographs which, arranged topically, touch upon many aspects of life in the late nineteenth century—industry, agriculture, transportation, religion, education, social affairs, and race relations. The authors are expert in the

care of photographic documents; hence their images, developed from original glass negatives, are sharp and detailed. Likewise, *The Image of Progress* represents a great deal of impressive research. Two of the major sources (the Auburn University Archives Collection and the Erik Overby Collection at the University of South Alabama) contain more than 130,000 negatives between them, and it is no exaggeration to say that the authors searched the nation for material. It is true that views of Mobile, Birmingham, and other business and industrial centers dominate the book, but McLaurin and Thomason were limited by the scarcity of rural sources, and by their own preoccupation with the expansion of urban society in Alabama.

The Image of Progress is no mere album of faces; one of its merits is that it captures so many unposed scenes, full of motion and arresting figures. Today, city streets are inhospitable drag strips, but at the turn of the century—as numerous shots taken in Alabama towns prove—streets were thoroughfares on which pedestrians, messenger boys, vendors, wagons, trolleys, and low-slung electric cables competed for space. Fatalities were as common then as now, but our great-grandparents were not intimidated by their own pavements. Nor, judging by their appearance, were these Alabamians intimidated by poverty, primitive conditions, or grinding physical labor. They were photographed, for the most part, in the middle of work; they seem, not necessarily happy, but thoroughly at home. Some of the pictures are memorable reflections of the human spirit: a knot of girls in a cotton mill, strong, pretty, and rather defiant; a carefully dressed black man, one hand on his hound, the other holding a rabbit-eared shotgun; two grinning, Penrodian clerks in a drug store. As the authors state, these images convey the reality of that time “in ways words alone cannot manage.”

McLaurin and Thomason attempt to interpret the New South in words as well as with photographs, and thereby raise a number of questions. Specifically, they openly avoid the controversial subject of politics, even though contests between agrarian reformers and Bourbon Democrats formed a major part of late nineteenth century public culture. In seeking to imitate “the photographers’ acceptance of the world as they

found it," McLaurin and Thomason take sides, in effect, with the victorious Democratic conservatives, and they do so without significant comment as to the availability of political-photographic sources.

A more serious shortcoming of *The Image of Progress* concerns the very title of the book. In their introduction, the authors outline the economic woes endured by Alabamians during the New South era: declining crop prices, a rising rate of tenancy, a remorseless credit system, and capital-poor industry. Farm life was all too often characterized by hopelessness and isolation; city workers traded a higher standard of living for unsafe shops and fear of unemployment. "Compounding the problem," observe McLaurin and Thomason, "was the Southerners' sense of inferiority, heightened by defeat, which led them to cling even more tenaciously to an idealized past while seeking full partnership in America's present and future." Materially and psychologically, Alabama carried her scars, though life for many Alabamians was meaningful and rich in spirit. Yet wherein, judged by the standards of this book, was the period 1872-1917 a time of progress?

Frank Lawrence Owsley, Jr. *Struggle for the Gulf Borderlands: The Creek War and the Battle of New Orleans 1812-1815*. Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1981. 255 pp. \$20.

The War of 1812 is a peculiarly awkward episode in American history. The United States fought to uphold the pacific rights of neutrals, attempted to conquer Canada, and barely succeeded in defending its own soil against British invaders. Historians now recognize that the conflict was inspired by American expansionist ambitions, but few realize that some of those ambitions were, in fact, achieved. Success crowned American arms in Alabama and on the Gulf Coast; the victims of our aggression were hapless Indians and neutral Spaniards. Professor Larry Owsley, of Auburn University, has focussed a spotlight on that aspect of the war, and it is brilliantly illuminating.

Another book on Andy Jackson, Horseshoe Bend, and the

battle of New Orleans might seem superfluous, but Owsley has combed the tangle of printed accounts, searched the manuscript collections of all the participants, and has fine-chiselled a mountain of evidence into an exceptionally concise narrative and thorough analysis of the struggle for the Gulf borderlands. By linking the campaigns in Alabama and Louisiana he has demonstrated the rational development of events and their logical historical culmination—a unique and highly valuable achievement, a fascinating tale.

For all parties, space and distance were the critical factors. The survival of the Indians depended upon space, but their American conquerors overcame distances that stretched supply lines to the breaking point. Spanish West Florida's isolation put her at the mercy of everyone. Not even the Royal Navy could span the leagues between Whitehall and Chalmette.

As in all wars, the concentration of overwhelming force was decisive. The Red Sticks achieved it at Fort Mims, the Americans at Horseshoe Bend and many another bloody field in the Creek War. The result was massacre: twenty redmen for one white at Autosse, forty for the price of one at Tallushatchee, and no one counted the women and children who died as a result of the scorched earth policy pursued by the triumphant Americans. The story was no different at Mobile or Pensacola, except that civilized Europeans bowed gracefully (or withdrew rapidly) in the face of crushing odds.

Other considerations also weighed. Owsley drives home the point that the action at Fort Mims exhausted the Creeks' offensive capacity; thereafter their shortage of powder and shot reduced them to near impotence. Spain could not provide for them, and British supplies came too late—even assuming the survivors had any fight left in them. The psychological aspects of the war are also intriguing. American hysteria turned isolated murders into massacres long before Fort Mims; a handful of runaway blacks raised the spectre of genocidal warfare; and the poor Red Sticks imagined themselves divinely protected.

As for the British, their performance was unimpressive. The utility of Indian allies was no more than a oft-recurring dream. The first attack on Mobile was badly planned, worse

carried out. Cochrane's decision to strike directly at New Orleans was arguably correct, but to do so without proper shipping and without the element of surprise was folly. Pakenham compounded every mistake and paid dearly. As for the "unlimited mobility" of the Royal Navy (whose great ships were strung out at anchor from Dauphin Island to Cat Island), it ended in the shallow waters of Lake Borgne, as it would have in the mud-flats of Mobile Bay. Owsley makes it clear that Jackson was never in great danger of defeat by an enemy confronting him; his genius lay in overcoming the problems of distance, supply, local inertia; in providing decisive and inspirational leadership—quite enough to raise him above his contemporaries.

Owsley's carefully balanced presentation of all sides of the story leaves little unsaid. He explores virtually every option and alternative facing his principals, and he fairly weighs (and frequently qualifies) the contributions of the many scholars who have preceded him. His will not be the last word on the Creek War and the battle of New Orleans, for they are part of the lore of this region; but his work will be a necessary guide to all who follow him. They will find little to add and much to be grateful for.

Robert R. Rea
Auburn University

THE ALABAMA HISTORICAL QUARTERLY



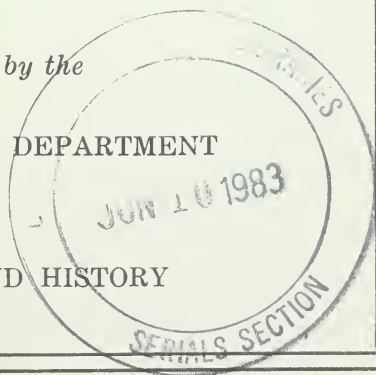
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CHARTING MOBILE BAY AND RIVER

By

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No one knows when the first European chart of Mobile Bay was made. Legends about the Welsh "Prince Madoc" who supposedly landed in Mobile Bay in 1170 are exciting, but hardly the substance of which factual history is made!¹ Documented accounts of the voyage by Alonso Alvarez de Pineda along the Gulf in 1519 reveal he spent some time in Mobile Bay careening his ships.² Still, it was not until the closing decades of the eighteenth century that Mobile Bay was charted in an accurate and scientific manner.

True, there were numerous maps and charts drawn up of the Gulf and lower Mississippi Basin,³ but their accuracy was suspect, as noted by a report of French engineers at the time of the Louisiana Purchase of 1803:

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¹For a discussion of the Madoc legend, see Robert R. Rea, "Madogwys Forever! The Present State of the Madoc Controversy," *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, XXX, No. 1 (Spring, 1968), 6-17.

²John Gilmary Shea, "Ancient Florida," in *Narrative and Critical History of America*, edited by Justin Winsor (8 vols.; Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1886-1889), II, 237.

³For example, see the essay by Justin Winsor, "Cartography of Louisiana and the Mississippi Basin Under the French Domination," in *ibid.*, V, 79-86; and two articles by Jack D.L. Holmes: "Maps, Plans and Charts of Louisiana in Spanish and Cuban Archives: A Checklist," *Louisiana Studies*, II, No. 4 (Winter, 1963), 183-203; and "Maps, Plans, and Charts of Louisiana in Paris Archives: A Checklist," in *ibid.*, IV, No. 3 (Fall, 1965), 200-221.

"All the maps and plans which have been drawn up to the present time . . . are not, to be exact, anything more than sketches, and they have nothing of the exactitude and precision which might be expected to-day of their labors."⁴

The quality of the early French maps may have been poor, but the engineers made up in quantity what they may have lacked in accuracy. This appears from the extant examples scattered in archives and libraries throughout the world.⁵

Careful cartography won government support from the British, and the charting of Mobile Bay really begins following the occupation of French Mobile in 1763 by the terms of the Treaty of Paris which ended the Seven Years War. For two decades the British remained in East Florida with its capital at St. Augustine and West Florida with the center of government at Pensacola. Mobile was an important population center of West Florida, particularly after the Proclamation of 1763 opened the rich lands to American immigration.

A number of British surveyors and army officers plied their craft in charting the area almost to the eve of the American Revolution. Captain Philip Pittman came to Mobile in the summer of 1763 and was not impressed with what he found:

"Mobile is situated on the banks of the river of that name, just at the place where the fresh and salt waters mix; when the tide goes out it leaves an abundance of small fishes on the marshes which lie opposite the town, and the heat of the sun in summer kills the fish; and the stench of them, of the stagnated water in the neighbouring swamps, and the slimy mud, render the air putrid. To this may be added, that the water of the wells is brackish, and there is none to be found whol(e)some within less than one mile and a

⁴*Ibid.*, 200, quoting from Rosily's "Instructions relatives aux travaux des ingenieurs-geographes de la Louisiana," Paris, le 9 frimaire an II (1803), Archives Nationales (Paris), Colonies, 13-A-Louisiana-51, folios 132-133.

⁵Jack D.L. Holmes, "Maps, Plans and Charts of Colonial Alabama in French and Spanish Archives," *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, XXVII, Nos. 1 and 2 (Spring and Summer, 1965), 7-21.

half of the place. . . ."⁶

Yellow fever and malaria conspired to make life miserable for the British troops in West Florida.⁷ A Scottish physician with the army, Dr. John Lorimer, blamed "misconduct" by the troops on the prevalence of death.⁸ Indeed, several decades later an American officer noted much the same thing among the garrison: "Inordinate use of Ardent Spirits and bad Wine, superadded to high seasoned meats and promiscuous Intercourse with lews Women, will disorder any (but) the most robust Habit of Body."⁹

Dr. Lorimer was an intellectually-curious Scot, a good example of the Scottish Renaissance of the late eighteenth century. For its size, West Florida attracted an inordinate number of these men — William Bartram,¹⁰ Daniel Clark, Sr.¹¹

"Captain Philip Pittman, *The Present State of the European Settlements on the Missis(s)ippi* (London: J. Nourse, 1770; facsimile edition with introduction by Robert R. Rea; Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1973), vii-viii.

⁷Robert R. Rea, "Graveyard for Britons," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XLVII, No. 3 (January, 1969), 345-364.

⁸"Extracts of a LETTER from Dr. Lorimer, of West-Florida, to Hugh Williamson, M.C., Read Before the Society, April 21st, 1769," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, I (January 1, 1769-Jan. 1, 1771), 250-251. On Lorimer's contributions to West Florida, see Robert R. Rea and Jack D.L. Holmes, "Dr. John Lorimer and the Natural Sciences in British West Florida," *Southern Humanities Review*, IV, No. 4 (Fall, 1970), 363-372.

⁹(Colonel) John Pope, *A Tour Through the Southern and Western Territories of the United States of North-America; The Spanish Dominions on the River Mississippi, and the Floridas; the Countries of the Creek Nations; and Many Uninhabited Parts* (Richmond: Printed by John Dixon for the Author and his three children, 1792; reprinted, for Charles L. Woodward at New York, 1888), 44.

¹⁰One of the best editions of William Bartram's *Travels Through North & South Carolina, Georgia, East & West Florida, the Cherokee Country, the Extensive Territories of the Muscogulges or Creek Confederacy, and the Country of the Choctaws; Containing an Account of the Soil and Natural Productions of those Regions, Together with Observations on the Manners of the Indians* (Philadelphia: James & Johnson, 1791), is the Naturalist's Edition, *The Travels of William Bartram*, edited by Francis Harper (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1958).

¹¹Clark was Irish, but a close friend of the Scottish surveyors in West Florida. He and Dr. John Lorimer were both elected to membership in the American Philosophical Society on April 21, 1769. Clark's manuscript, "An Account of West Florida," read to that body on February 3, 1769, has apparently disappeared from the APS archives. See William S. Coker and Jack D.L. Holmes, "Daniel Clark's Letter on the Mississippi Territory," *The Journal of Mississippi History*, XXXII, No. 2 (May, 1970), 153-169; and Kent Reilly, "Dr. John Lorimer: Scientist in West Florida," *The Echo* (Pensacola Historical Society), II, No. 4 (Fall, 1981), 2-9.

William Dunbar,¹² John Ellis,¹³ and Dr. Lorimer.

Lorimer described the winds on the Mobile coast:

"Now on this Coast, which is neither the East nor West side of a continent; in winter the Southerly Winds are warm and moist, the Northerly cold and dry: In summer we have the daily sea breeze from the South, and in the night or morning a refreshing gentle land wind from the North. The sky in this country is remarkably serene, especially when the winds are Northerly."¹⁴

Lorimer also commented on the lack of accurate charts of the Mobile coast: "There is no such thing as recommending any map of this country. Bellin¹⁵ and such as have copied from him, give some resemblance of the coast, but they are all erroneous, and that in very material articles."¹⁶ The British officers in West Florida copied from each other's work without a concern for their plagiarism, but they were also supportive of the work of others. Thus, Dr. Lorimer forwarded to the American Philosophical Society a note to the effect that Mobile Bay and other rivers in West Florida were then being charted by a fellow-Scot, George Gauld. "If Mr. Gauld's surveys are not soon published, he will possibly send a copy of them for your Society, but he is just now so engaged that he cannot set about such a work."¹⁷

George Gauld drew up one of the earliest accurate charts

¹²Jack D.L. Holmes, "William Dunbar," in *Lives of Mississippi Authors, 1817-1967*, edited by James B. Lloyd (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1981), 144-146, which corrects some of the errors in Eron Rowland (Mrs. Dunbar Rowland), *Life, Letters and Papers of William Dunbar of Elgin, Morayshire, Scotland, and Natchez, Mississippi, Pioneer Scientist of the Southern United States* (Jackson: Press of the Mississippi Historical Society, 1930).

¹³Robert R. Rea, "The King's Agent for British West Florida," *The Alabama Review*, XVI, No. 2 (April, 1963), 141-153.

¹⁴Lorimer's letter from Pensacola, January 7, 1769, as published in the *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*. See *supra*, note 8.

¹⁵Jacques Nicolas Bellin (1703-1772) was a naval engineer who drew up plans for the Gulf Coast during the 1740's. See Woodbury Lowery, *A Descriptive List of Maps of the Spanish Possessions Within the Present Limits of the United States, 1502-1820*, edited by Philip Lee Phillips (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1912), 286-287.

¹⁶Lorimer to Williamson, January 7, 1769.

¹⁷*Ibid.*

of Mobile Bay in 1768. Some two centuries later one of his descendants described the reconnaissance of the Gulf Coast as based on the manuscript George Gauld sent via his friend Dr. Lorimer to the American Philosophical Society. He also submitted a map of Mobile Bay¹⁸ which details locations of people, places and things. Gauld was elected to membership in the American Philosophical Society, apparently on two separate occasions! On January 19, 1770, he was named with Joseph Ellicott, whose remarkable brother Andrew, drew the thirty-first parallel Southern Boundary as we shall see below. Again, on January 21, 1774, he was re-elected to membership along with Bernard Romans, both men claiming Pensacola as their home.¹⁹

Whatever his connection with that distinguished body of learned men, Gauld made his own mark, although at least one of his colleagues was unimpressed with Gauld's description of the rivers of West Florida. Dr. Benjamin Smith Barton, one-time president of the society, and a specialist in bees and poisonous honey in North America, borrowed Gauld's manuscript between November 4 and 18, 1803. Apparently, he was the unidentified person who wrote across the manuscript, "This largely uninteresting Paper can hardly obtain a Place in the Transactions of a Philosophical Society. It should however be preserved in the Files for the Use of Historians or Map makers."²⁰

Gauld's description of Mobile Bay is superb for its time, and it is difficult to reconcile Barton's harsh appraisal with the result:

¹⁸George Gauld, "A General Description of the Sea-Coast, Harbours, Lakes, Rivers &c.^a of the Province of West Florida, 1769," Manuscript Collection, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, Vol. 917.59/G 23. Permission to publish portions was extended to this author by Gertrude D. Hess, Associate Librarian, on December 8, 1969, two centuries after Gauld penned his remarks! This manuscript has been summarized with biographical notes in Charles A. Gauld, "A Scottish View of West Florida in 1769," *Tequesta*, XXIX (1969), 61-66.

¹⁹American Philosophical Society, *Early Proceedings of the A.P.S. for the Promotion of Useful Knowledge Compiled by One of the Secretaries from the Manuscript Minutes of its Meetings from 1744 to 1838* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1884), 48, 86-87.

²⁰Gauld's manuscript, as cited above, note 18. Apparently, Gauld did not share Barton's views. On May 24, 1776, he petitioned West Florida's Governor Peter Chester for a land grant on the east branch of Pearl River as reward for his surveys: Gauld to Peter Chester, Pensacola, May 24, 1776, manuscript in the Huntington Library (San Marino, California), HM 1580.

"The Land here," he wrote, "and to the Eastward as far as [the] Bay of Mobile, is swampy towards the Sea, with a clay bottom for 2 or 3 miles back, but afterwards it is cover'd chiefly with Pines, Life Oak, and Hickory, and the soil is sandy, or gravelly for several miles, before it becomes truly fit for culture, but it is good for Pasturage, and where the inhabitants are industrious may turn out advantageously."²¹

Gauld went on to describe the two islands Massacre and Dauphin then separated by five miles but at one time, prior to a hurricane's destructive fury, had been joined. "These two Islands are supposed formerly to have been but one, which went by the name of Massacre, so called by Monsieur d'Ibberville from a large heap of Human Bones, found thereon at his first landing [in 1699], but afterwards it was called Dauphin Island, in honour of the Dauphin of France, and to take of(f) the disagreeable idea implied by the other name."²²

Gauld knew the literature of travel along the Gulf and he cites the Jesuit explorer/historian Father Pierre Francois Xavier de Charlevoix, as well as Le Page du Pratz who had written about the Mobile Bay area. Since Gauld's description has not been published, it seems appropriate to quote extensively from his survey of Mobile Bay:

"The deepest water on this, which is the Bar of Mobile, or rather Mobile Bay (for there is another Bar at the entrance of the River near the Town) is only 15 or 16 feet. The mark for going over it in the deepest channel, is to bring little Pelican Island well on with the Bluff on the East end of Dauphin Island, bearing about N.N.W. $\frac{3}{4}$ W. and then steer in for the Key in that direction. The Point of Mobile bears from the Bar nearly due North 4 miles and the Kay (sic) is

²¹Gauld's manuscript, cited in note 18.

²²*Ibid.* The role of Dauphin Island in early Alabama history has been noted by Jack D.L. Holmes in several articles: "Dauphin Island," in *Encyclopedia of Southern History*, edited by David C. Roller and Robert W. Twyman (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), 329-330; "Dauphin Island in the Franco-Spanish War, 1719-22," in *Frenchmen and French Ways in the Mississippi Valley*, edited by John Francis McDermott (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1969), 103-125; and "Dauphin Island's Critical Years: 1701-1722," *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, XXIX, Nos. 1-2 (Spring and Summer, 1967), 39-63.

more than a mile and a half within it, Both the East and West Reefs, as well as the Bar itself are steep towards the Sea, there being from 3 to 7 and 8 fathoms immediately without: this occasions a constant swell with a heavy Sea when it blows from the Southward, and therefore in rough weather it would be imprudent to attempt to go over it in a Vessel that draws above 10 or 11 feet Water.”²³

Gauld described the approach to the town of Mobile and the general configuration of Mobile Bay:

“From Mobile Point to the Town the distance is almost 11 Leagues nearly due North, and the breadth of the Bay in general about 3 or 4 Leagues, at the lower part of it is a deep that runs about 6 Leagues to the Eastward of the Point, having a narrow Peninsula between it and the Sea; The River Bon Secour falls into the Bottom of this Bay or Bight, and Fish River with that of *Le Saut* on the North side of it, on all which there are several Habitations.

“On the West side of the Bay of Mobile there are likewise, some small Rivers but none considerable, besides La Riviere aux Poules [Fowl River] by which there is a small inland communication to the Westward abovementioned and Dog River, which falls into the Bay about 9 miles below Mobile, has 5 or 6 feet in the Entire River and is Navigable for a Boat several miles back into the Country.

“With regard to the general depth of Water in the Bay there is from 3 to 2 fathoms two Thirds of the way from Mobile Point towards the Town, and the deepest water to be depended on in the upper part of the Bay is only 10 or 12 feet, and in many Places not so much; but there is no Danger, as the Bottom is a soft mud. Large Vessels cannot go within 7 miles of the Town. Notwithstanding all these inconveniences in Point of Navigation, Mobile having been the Frontier of the French Dominions in Louisiana, always was, and still is a very considerable place. It has a

²³Gauld's manuscript, cited in note 18.

small regular Fort formerly Fort Conde now called Fort Charlotte build of Brick, and a neat square of Barracks for the Officers and soldiers, the Town is pretty regular, of an oblong figure, on the West Bank of the River where it enters the Bay. Several of the Richest of the French Inhabitants left Mobile on its being given up to the English, but a great many still remain in the Town, and at their Plantations on the River, and on both sides of the Bay."

After Gauld mentioned that Mobile Bay ended "a little to the N.th ward of the Town in a number of Marshes and Lagoons, which subjects the People to Fevers and Agues in the Hot Seasons," he turned to a rather complete account of the Mobile River:

"The River of Mobile is divided into four Principal Branches about 40 miles above the Town; one of which called Tansa [Tensaw today], falls into the East part of the Bay; the other empties itself close by the Town where it has a Bar of 7 feet; but there is a small Branch a little to the Eastward of this, called Spanish River, where there is a Channel of 9 or 10 feet, when the Water is high, but this joins the River about 2 Leagues above the Town."

Gauld continued to describe the hydrography of the Mobile and Alabama River systems which included the confluence of the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers where the French Fort Toulouse was located. Thence to the north by northwest the Tombigbee River boasted two major forts, that of San Esteban de Tombeche built in 1789 and abandoned as being north of the thirty-first parallel in 1799, and Fort Confederacion, located on the site of the old French Tombigbee fort and the English Fort York, which had been abandoned in 1767.²⁴ Gauld con-

²⁴*Ibid.* A useful survey of the French colony and its forts in the interior of Alabama is the dated, but reliable essay by Andrew McFarland Davis, "Canada and Louisiana," in *Narrative and Critical History of America*, edited by Justin Winsor (8 vols.; Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1886-1889), V, 1-78. On the Spanish forts, see Jack D.L. Holmes, "Notes on the Spanish Fort San Esteban de Tombeche," *The Alabama Review*, XVIII, No. 4 (October, 1965), 281-290; and "Up the Tombigbee with the Spaniards: Juan de la Villebeuvre and the Treaty of Bouc fouca (1793)," *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, XL, Nos. 1-2 (Spring-Summer, 1978), 51-61.

cluded his description of the almost-pristine wilderness of Alabama:

"The River is navigable for Sloops and Schooners about 35 Leagues above the Town of Mobile. The Banks where low are partly overflowed in the Rainy Seasons,²⁵ which adds greatly to the Soil and adapts it particularly for the Cultivation of Rice; the sides of the River are cover'd in many places with large Canes, so thick that they are almost impenetrable; there is also plenty of Red, and White Cedar, Cypress, Elm, Ash, Hickory and various kinds of Oak; several People have lately settled on this River who find the Soil to answer beyond expectation."

Gauld's surveys of Mobile Bay remained in manuscript form, although two of his Atlantic surveys were published after his untimely death on June 8, 1782.²⁶

In 1779 Spain declared war against England with the avowed aim of driving British ships and settlers from the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean.²⁷ Following the August and September campaigns in the vicinity of Baton Rouge, the British surrendered Natchez and the following year, 1780, launched a full-scale expedition against the British Fort Charlott

²⁵Gauld's manuscript, cited in note 18. On flooding, see Jack D.L. Holmes, "Observations on the 1791 Floods in Alabama," *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, XL, Nos. 3-4 (Fall-Winter, 1978), 119-126.

²⁶In a sketch of Gauld's work written by Dr. G.L. Mowat in 1943, and accompanying Gauld's manuscript, is the notation that the surveyor was buried in the chapel in Tottenham Court Road, London, with the following on his tombstone: "George Gauld, A.M., Surveyor of the Coasts of Florida, &c. Born at Ardbrack, in the parish of Botriphny, Banffshire. Died in London, June 8, 1782, age 50." William Faden published in London in 1790 Gauld's *An Account of the Surveys of Florida, &c. with Directions for Sailing from Jamaica or the West Indies by the West End of Cuba, and Through the Gulph of Florida, to Accompany Mr. Gauld's Charts*, but this does not include Gauld's survey of Mobile Bay. In 1796 Faden published the other posthumous work, *Observations on the Florida Keys, Reef, With Directions for Sailing Along the Keys. . . .* The most recent study of Gauld, which summarizes the Mobile Bay notes of the British mariner, is Captain John D. Ware, *George Gauld, Surveyor and Cartographer of the Gulf Coast*, revised and completed by Robert R. Rea (Gainesville and Tampa: University Presses of Florida, 1982), 96-103. A portion of Gauld's charts showing Mobile Bay is in Plate VII.

²⁷Royal Order, "Declaration of War Against His Britannic Majesty," Aranjuez, May 18, 1779, Archivo General de Indias (Sevilla), Papeles procedentes de la Isla de Cuba (hereafter cited as AGI, PC), legajo 569.

at Mobile.²⁸ One of the career naval officers serving under General Bernardo de Galvez during the Mobile Campaign was Pilot first-class Jose Antonio de Evia. While chasing a British ship both Evia and his adversaries ran aground in Mobile Bay and Evia had first-hand knowledge that the British charts were less accurate than the pilots demanded. Accordingly, after the war was over and the British had been driven from the Gulf by the 1783 peace treaty,²⁹ Galvez sent Evia on a reconnaissance of the entire Gulf of Mexico, which he completed in 1786.³⁰ Descriptions of Evia's 1784 exploration of Mobile Bay do not differ markedly from those of Gauld, but he does give valuable landmarks suitable for careful navigation. As time worn on and pilots became more experienced, there were fewer shipwrecks along the coast of "Nueva Florida."³¹ This was owing to the surveys of Gauld and Evia.

By far the most accurate and careful charting of Mobile Bay and River was done by the joint Spanish and American boundary commission in 1799. With the signing of the Treaty of San Lorenzo or Pinckney's Treaty of October 27, 1795, more than a decade of dispute between Spain and the United States concerning the southern boundary and joint navigation of the Mississippi River seemed to be settled. Spain named a long-time Natchez adjutant, born in Pennsylvania but then a Spanish vassal, as commissioner, Stephen Minor.³² William

²⁸The traditional account of Galvez, John Walton Caughey, *Bernardo de Galvez in Louisiana, 1776-1783*, facsimile of 1934 edition with foreword by Jack D.L. Holmes (Gretna, La.: Pelican, 1972), has been up-dated by the following: J. Leitch Wright, Jr., *Florida in the American Revolution* (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1975); J. Barton Starr, *Tories, Dons, and Rebels: The American Revolution in British West Florida* (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1976); and F. de Borja Medina Rojas, *Jose de Ezpeleta, Gobernador de la Mobila, 1780-1781* (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos, 1980).

²⁹Tratado definitivo de Paz. . . . Versailles, September 3, 1783, copy printed at Madrid: Imprenta Real, 1783, in Archivo General de la Nacion (Mexico, D.F.), Reales Cédulas, Vol. CXXVI, fols. 40-117. Article V refers to West Florida's cession.

³⁰Jack D.L. Holmes (ed.), *Jose de Evia y sus reconocimientos del Golfo de Mexico, 1783-1796*, Vol. XXVI, *Coleccion Chimalistac de Libros y Documentos acerca de la Nueva Espana* (Madrid: Ediciones Jose Porrua Turanzas, 1968), 7-8; and Jose de Ovia and His Activities in Mobile, 1780-1784," *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, XXXIV, No. 2 (Summer, 1972), 107-108.

³¹The term "New Florida" for Mobile Bay was used by Commandant Enrique Grimarest, who succeeded Jose de Ezpeleta at Mobile, in a dispatch to Bernardo de Galvez, Mobile, December 31, 1781, AGI, PC, leg. 1330.

³²Jack D.L. Holmes, "Stephen Minor: Natchez Pioneer," *Journal of Mississippi History*, XLII, No. 1 (February, 1980), 17-26.

Dunbar served as Spanish astronomical surveyor.³³ President George Washington appointed Andrew Ellicott and Thomas Freeman as commissioner and surveyor respectively.³⁴

The joint boundary commission established the initial point of the thirty-first parallel at a mound called "Union Hill" and located near Clarksville in May, 1798.³⁵ The expedition then cut their laborious way through the Mississippi and Alabama cane thickets to Thompson's Creek and the Pearl River. By March, 1799, Ellicott and Minor were busy checking their calculations and adjusting the line as far as the Mobile River. It was not a happy job, as indicated in one of Minor's letters:

"Since my last of the 18.th ultimo we have been busily employed in making the necessary observations to ascertain the true point of Latitude on this River, Mr. Ellicott with the large sector and myself with the small one; we have not finished yet owing to the number of cloudy nights we have had; the weather is now fine and if it continues we shall finish in 4 days. — We are however sufficiently advanced to know that the line will pass this river at the lower end of a Bluff on which the family of the Chastangs live and a widow of the name of Narbon about 31 miles above Mobile by water and 21 on a direct line, — a small distance below is another very handsome high Bluff occupied by a Madam(e) Augustin [Rochon] as a Vauchery.—³⁶

"... On the 1.st of July this River and the Tenesa [Tensaw] overflowed their banks which is a swamp of ten miles wide and continues to be so some distance beyond S.^t Estevan and from what the Inhabitants tell

³³*Supra*, note 12.

³⁴Jack D.L. Holmes, *Gayoso, The Life of a Spanish Governor in The Mississippi Valley, 1789-1799* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press for the Louisiana Historical Association, 1965), 173-189, 233-235.

³⁵Jack D.L. Holmes (ed.), "William Dunbar's Correspondence on the Southern Boundary of Mississippi, 1798," *Journal of Mississippi History*, XXVII, No. 2 (May, 1965), 187-190

³⁶Stephen Minor to Manuel Gayoso de Lemos, Camp on Mobile River, April 3, 1799, AGI, PC, leg. 2371. On these and other settlers of the Tensaw-Tombigbee Valley, see Jack D.L. Holmes, "Alabama's Forgotten Settlers: Notes on the Spanish Mobile District, 1780-1813," *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, XXXIII, No. 2 (Summer, 1971), 87-97; and "The Role of Blacks in Spanish Alabama: The Mobile District, 1780-1813," in *ibid.*, XXXVII, No. 1 (Spring, 1975), 5-18.

me the Rivers will not be within their banks before the first of May, and the Swamps will remain impassable untill Aug.^t We shall therefore be obliged to pass our Horses over in Boats by a rout(e) of at least sixteen Miles by Water. — We have also been obliged to make large openings on both sides of this Swamp on the High Lands, build large fires, hoist up flags, as signals in order to ascertain the true course of the line and the distance across, which by the help of the astronomical circle we have accomplished. —”

Ellicott had joined Minor on the boundary line where they set their instruments on March 18, “when a course of observations was begun, and completed on the 9th of April following.” He added his comments on the difficulties “we met with in carrying the line over the Mobile swamp,” and referred to the appendix to his work.³⁷

While historians have depended too heavily perhaps on this *Journal* of Andrew Ellicott, the errors in the published version have caused subsequent difficulties. One illustration shows in connection with the so-called “Ellicott Stone.”

³⁷Andrew Ellicott, *The Journal of Andrew Ellicott, Late Commissioner on Behalf of the United States During Part of the Year 1796, the Years 1797, 1798, 1799, and Part of the Year 1800: For Determining the Boundary Between the United States and the Possessions of His Catholic Majesty in America, Containing Occasional Remarks on the Situation, Soil, Rivers, Natural Productions, and Diseases of the Different Countries on the Ohio, Mississippi, and Gulf of Mexico, with Six Maps, Comprehending the Ohio, the Mississippi from the Mouth of the Ohio to the Gulf of Mexico, the Whole of West Florida and Part of East Florida. To which is Added an Appendix, Containing All the Astronomical Observations Made Use of for Determining the Boundary, With Many Others, Made in Different Parts of the Country for Settling the Geographical Positions of Some Important Points, with Maps of the Boundary on a Large Scale; Likewise a Great Number of Thermometrical Observations Made at Different Times and Places* (Philadelphia: Thomas Dobson, 1803; reprint edition, Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1962), 198. This standard source for Ellicott's work on the commission is flawed in several ways, necessitating the consultation of records in the U.S. National Archives, Record Group 76. A manuscript in Ellicott's own hand with marginal corrections by him was given Albert Gallatin by Andrew Ellicott in 1801-1802, along with Ellicott's map of Mobile Bay and his unpublished manuscript “observations of the Rivers Mississippi, etc.” Gallatin explained the importance of having borrowed Ellicott's material in a letter to Secretary of State Martin Van Buren, February 18, 1830, N.A., R.G. 76, “gray box:” when the British burned the capitol during September, 1814, the originals of Ellicott's materials were presumed lost. Thus, the National Archives has preserved in the Ellicott Papers of Record Group 76 what are some of the most important documents in early American history.

Erected by the joint boundary commission in 1799, it is the only surviving monument to their labor. An attorney from Mobile who spoke at the dedication of a marker nearby on U.S. Highway 43 some twenty-one miles North of Mobile, noted that the "Ellicott Stone is the origin of all the land surveys in the southern part of Alabama and Mississippi." But in his published remarks, Jack C. Gallalee quotes from the *Journal's* appendix and says, "Ellicott's recollection is at fault regarding the spelling of Dominios and Carlos on the stone."³⁸

In the appendix the printer has rendered Ellicott's account as follows:

"... marked on the north side U.S. Lat. 31° 1799,—and
on the south side DOMINOS de S.M.C. CAROLUS IV.
Lat. 31° 1799."³⁹

By checking the appendix with Ellicott's dispatch to Secretary of State Timothy Pickering in the National Archives, the correct information is given:⁴⁰

"... marked on the north side

U.S.
Lat. 31°
1799

and on the south side

DOMINIOS DE S.M.C.
Carlos IV. Lat. 31° DE
1799."

The stone was damaged by a falling tree before the protective fence was erected, but it is still possible to see most of the inscription, which is a third variation on the theme!⁴¹

³⁸Jack C. Gallalee, "Andrew Ellicott and the Ellicott Stone," *The Alabama Review*, XVIII, No. 2 (April, 1965), 92-105. The quote is from p. 99, note 16. Gallalee apparently did not use any of the Ellicott material in the National Archives.

³⁹Ellicott, *Journal*, Appendix, 83.

⁴⁰Ellicott to Secretary of State [Pickering], Pensacola, April 21, 1799, National Archives, R.G. 76, Vol. III.

⁴¹Photos by the author, May, 1965. See illustrations.

DOMINIO
DE S.M. CARLOS IV
LAT. 31.°
1799

U.S.
L(at?) 31°

In his appendix to the April 21 dispatch to Pickering, Ellicott adds information about the floods and what trouble it caused:

“On our arrival at the end of the guide line on the Mobile River one serious difficulty presented itself: Which was the continuation of the line thro’ the swamps which is at all times almost impenetrable but at this season of the year absolutely so being whol(l)y inundated: But very fortunately we found in the neighbourhood of our camp a small hill the summit of which was just elevated above the lofty trees in the swamp: From the top of this hill we could plainly discover the pine trees on the up-land on the other side. Upon ascertaining this fact we sent a party thro’ to the other side along the water courses by which the swamp is intersected in various directions with orders to make a large fire in the night with light wood, the same was likewise to be done on the hill before mentioned to obtain nearly the direction from one place to the other. — The atmosphere was too much filled with smoke to discover a flag, the woods being on fire on both sides of the swamp. — It happened unfortunately that the day before our fires were to be lighted, the fire in the woods had extended almost over all the high land on both sides of the swamp by which so many dead trees were set on fire that there was no possibility of discriminating between them and our fires. It was then agreed that the parties should light up and extinguish their fires a certain number of times making stated intervals. — This succeeded so well that we became certain of not taking a wrong fire in determining our angles but contrary to our expectation a

heavy rain fell the same night shortly after we had finished the experiment and extinguished all the fires in the woods. —"⁴²

The resulting storm cleared before a stiff breeze and decided the commission on doing their observations by day. Ellicott was a skilled mathematician who had considerable experience drawing boundary lines,⁴³ and he took special pride in how he adjusted the angles and observations to correct the line to the exact measurement of the thirty-first parallel as far as the Mississippi River.⁴⁴

Meanwhile, as Minor and Ellicott sought to correct the line on the Mobile River, a deputy surveyor named David Gillespie went up the Tombigbee River as far as St. Stephens, the Spanish fort established in 1789 to protect the settlers of the Tensaw-Tombigbee valley. The fort was located at 31° 33' 44".⁴⁵ By that time, however, the fort was no longer Spanish: on February 5, 1799 Spanish commandant Fernando Lisoro had turned the keys over Richard Brashear and three days later the soldiers were in Mobile.⁴⁶

The boundary commission continued its work due east until a group of hostile Seminoles stole enough as to resolve Ellicott and Minor on a sea voyage around Florida to the St. Mary's River, where the line was drawn toward the west.⁴⁷ At some time in his journey Ellicott wrote a fascinating account of the rivers in West Florida. It is instructive of the Mobile District shortly before the United States occupied the

⁴²Ellicott to Secretary of State Pickering, April 21, 1799.

⁴³Biographical data on Ellicott may be found in Harrison Griswold Dwight, "Andrew Ellicott," *Dictionary of American Biography*, edited by Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone (23 vols.; New York: Charles Scribner's, 1928-1958), VI, 89-90; Mrs. Sally Kennedy Alexander, "A Sketch of the Life of Major Andrew Ellicott," *Records of the Columbia Historical Society* (Washington, D.C.), II (1899), 158-202; and Catherine Van Cortlandt Mathews, *Andrew Ellicott, his Life and Letters* (New York: Grafton Press, 1908).

⁴⁴The observations are enclosed in the appendix to Ellicott to Secretary of State Pickering, April 21, 1799; and are printed in the *Appendix* to his *Journal*, 83-84. See illustration.

⁴⁵Holmes, "Notes on Fort San Esteban de Tombeche," 289. See *supra*, note 24.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*

⁴⁷Jack D.L. Holmes, "The Southern Boundary Commission, the Chattahoochee River, and the Florida Seminoles, 1799," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XLIV, No. 4 (April, 1966), 312-341.

remaining Spanish territory as far east as the Perdido River.⁴⁸ Its use with the accompanying map by Ellicott reveals much about the early mapping of the Mobile Bay and River.

"The Mobile is a fine large river, and navigable some distance above the boundary for any vessel that can cross the bar into the bay. One square-rigged vessel has been as high as Fort S.^t Stephens in Latitude 31° 33' 44".

"When the river is low, the tide ebbs and flows several miles above the line, and is sometimes observed as high as Fort S.^t Stephens; but when the river is full, there is but little if any tide above the Town of Mobile. It was in the latter state when I ascended it, and notwithstanding the current being constantly against us, and but little fair wind, we reached the place of our encampment north of the boundary in four days — my vessel was about 40 tons burden. —

"About six miles north of the boundary the Tombeckby, and Alabama rivers unite, and after accompanying each other more than three miles separate: — the western branch from thence down to the bay is called Mobile. — The Alabama retains its name till it joins some of its own waters, which had been separated from it for several miles, and then takes the name of Tensaw which it retains till it falls into the head of the bay. —

"The easiest way from the gulf of Mexico by water into the United States is up those rivers, the navigation of each being equally good. —

"The up-land on those rivers is of an inferior quality from their mouths up to the latitude of fort S.^t Stephens, and produces little besides pitch-pine, and wire-grass; but is said to become better as you ascend the rivers. — The lands on those rivers have notwithstanding had a good character for fertility; but this has arisen from not discriminating between the up-land which is unfit for cultivation, and the banks of the rivers which are fertile in the extreme, and to which agriculture is

⁴⁸Jack D.L. Holmes, "The Mobile *Gazette* and the American Occupation of Mobile in 1813: A Lesson in Historical Detective Work," *Journal of the Alabama Academy of Science*, XLVII, No. 2 (April, 1976), 79-86.

almost whol(ly) continued for a number of miles above the boundary. But those lands are subject to a great inconvenience from the inundations of the rivers. —

“Planting is not attempted in the spring till the waters have subsided, and it sometimes happens that inundations follow the first fall of the waters in the spring, and whol(ly) destroy the previous labours of the Planters. — This was the case in May 1799 after the corn was two feet high: But this inconvenience is by no means so great as it would be in a more northerly latitude, — there still remains summer sufficient to bring a crop of corn to full maturity.

“The large swamp thro’ which the rivers meander, is intersected in almost all directions by smaller water courses, which keep up a constant connection between the main branches, — such of them as were used by our people in passing and repassing from one side to the other.

“At the mouth of the Mobile River stands the Town of that name. The situation is handsome, and some of the houses tolerably good, and for a place of its size the trade is considerable. The place is said to be unhealthy during the months of July, August, September and October. —

“The fort stands a short distance below the town, — it is a well built regular work, and was taken from the British by Don [Bernardo de] Galvez during our revolutionary war. — Since that time it has been repaired, and put in a good state of defence by the officers of his Catholic Majesty. —

“From the traverse of the river, the latitude of the Town appears to be about $30^{\circ} 36' 30''$ N. and the longitude 5.h[ours] 52' 17" west from the royal observatory at Greenwich.

“The Bay is extensive and supposed to be about 9 leagues in length; but too shoal for large Shipping. — The latitude of the bar at the entrance into the bay from the gulf of Mexico I found by a mean of two good observations to be about $30^{\circ} 12' 30''$ N. and as the course of the bay is nearly north and south

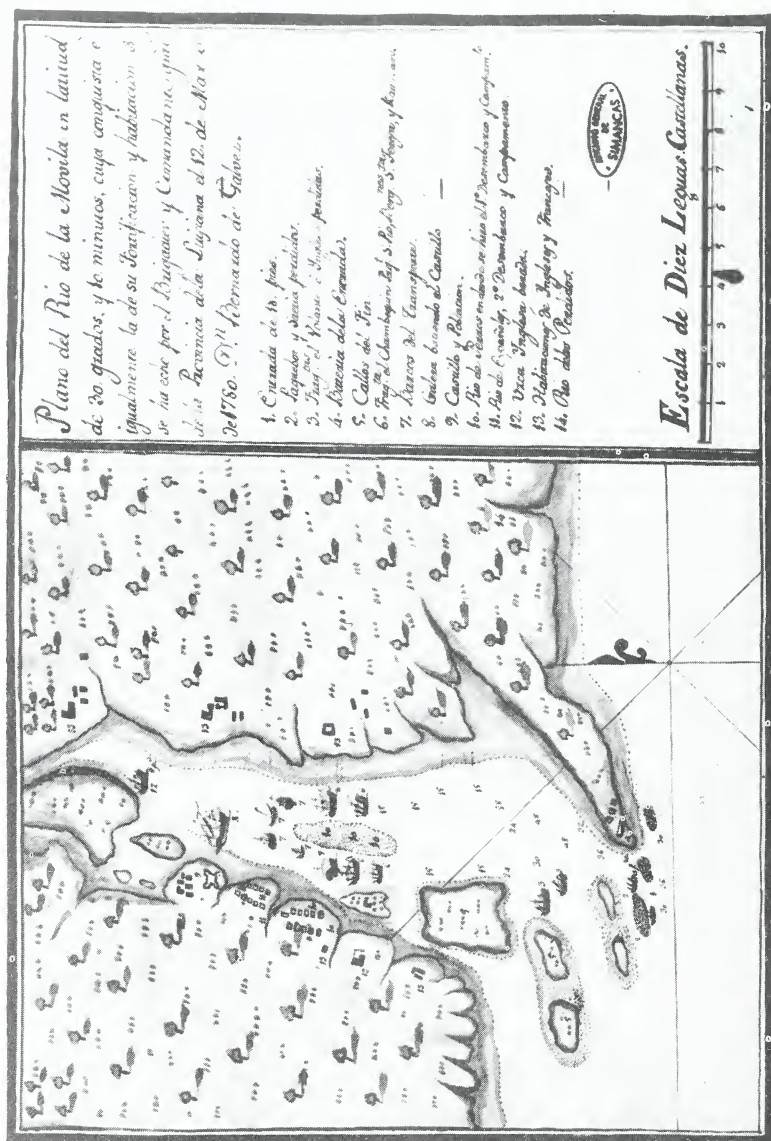
the longitude must be nearly the same as that of the Town."⁴⁹

Charting of Mobile by Andrew Ellicott indicates the progress made in astronomical observation as facilitated by the publication of almanacs on the position of stars in the heaven which formed the guide lines used by Ellicott. The use of the correspondence and miscellaneous descriptions and maps in the Ellicott materials of the National Archives indicates that no serious history of his life and times may be expected until scholars do use them. By an accident of history, his observations on the West Florida rivers happened not to be where they should have been, for that, the map and other observations were loaned to the intellectually-curious Albert Gallatin. An accident of history, or a sign that Clio was at work? Either way, the materials of which history is made were preserved.

⁴⁹Ellicott's map and observations of the Rivers Mississippi are in the National Archives, R.G. 76, Vol. III, and the gray box respectively. The map has been published by Jack D.L. Holmes (ed.), "Fort Stoddard in 1799: Seven Letters of Captain Bartholomew Schaumburgh," *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, XXVI, Nos. 3-4 (Fall and Winter, 1964), 240. See enclosed illustration. The discovery of these letters in the Letter Book of Major Thomas Cushing, in National Archives, R.G. 98, Vol. CLIV, is another example of using a section of archival material to replace that destroyed by the British in 1814.

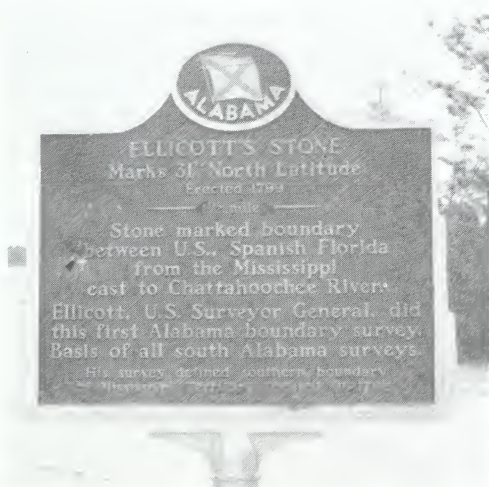
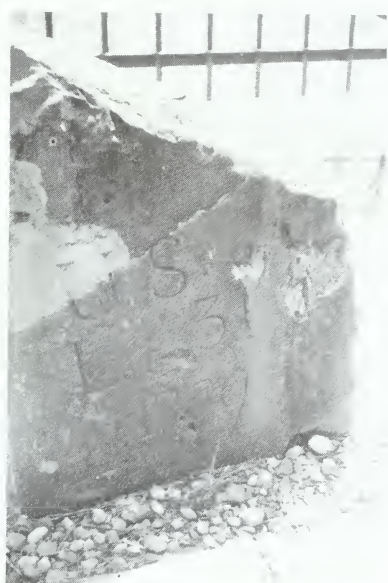
APPENDIX: LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- Plate #1: Galvez captures Mobile, March 1780, Archivo General de Simancas (Spain).
- Plate #2: Jose de Evia's 1784 chart of Mobile Bay and environs, Museo Naval (Madrid), published in Holmes, *Jose de Evia*.
- Plate #3: Andrew Ellicott; portrait in 1799, Mathews, *Life of Ellicott*.
- Plate #4 and #5: Four views of the Ellicott Stone in Alabama and historical marker (photos by Jack D.L. Holmes).
- Plate #7: Corrections made at Mobile and Tombigbee Rivers, (*Appendix* to his *Journal*).
- Plate #7: Corrections made at Mobile and Tombigbee Rivers, 1799 from *Ibid*.
- Plate #8: Corrections made in *Ibid*.
- Plate #9: Ellicott's sketch of Mobile Bay, 1799, U.S. National Archives, R.G. 76, Vol. III, also printed in Holmes, "Fort Stoddard in 1799," *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, Fall and Winter, 1964, 240.





MAJOR ANDREW ELLICOTT AT THE AGE OF 45.
FROM A MINIATURE PAINTED IN NEW ORLEANS IN 1799, NOW OWNED
BY HIS GREAT GRANDDAUGHTER, MRS. CHARLES
B. CURTIS, OF NEW YORK.



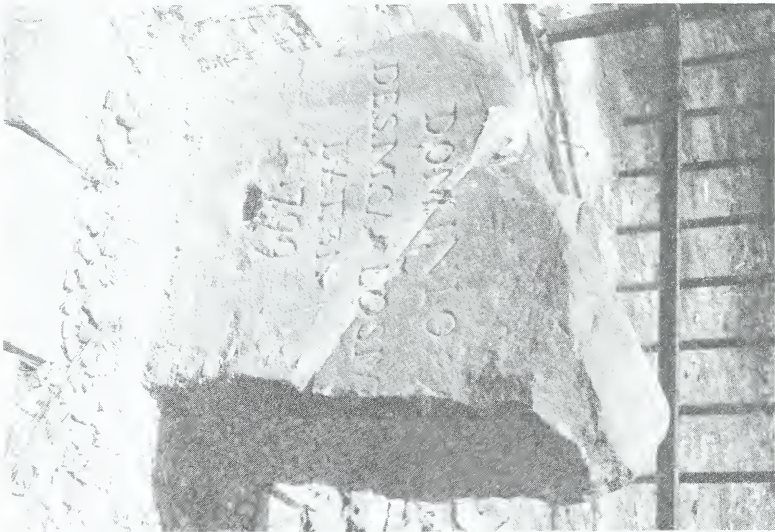


PLATE #5

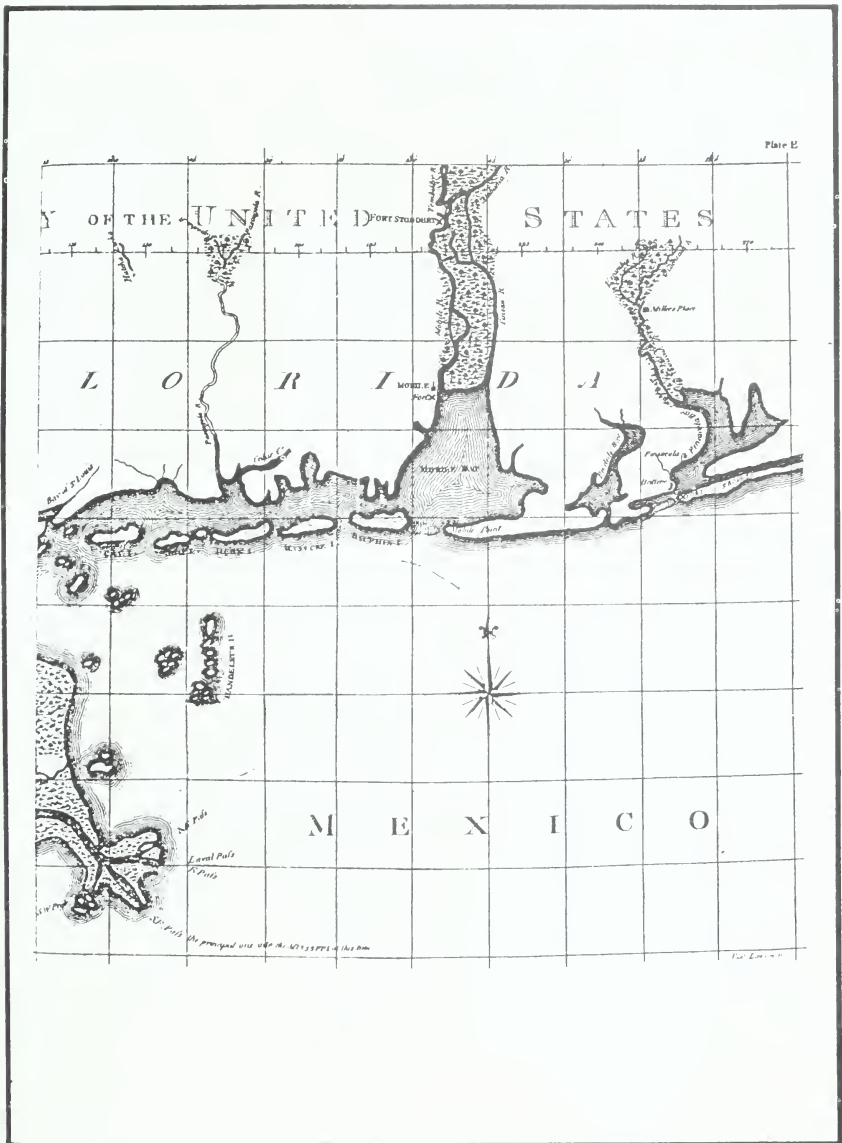
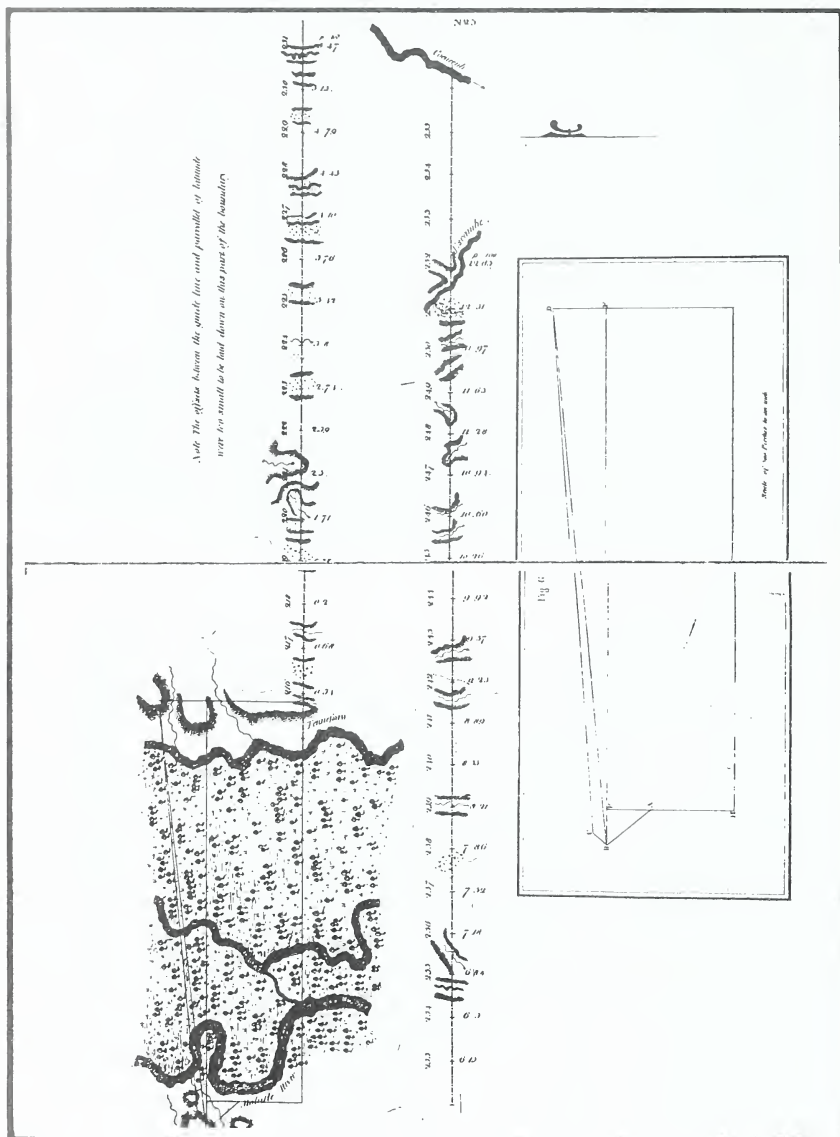


PLATE #6



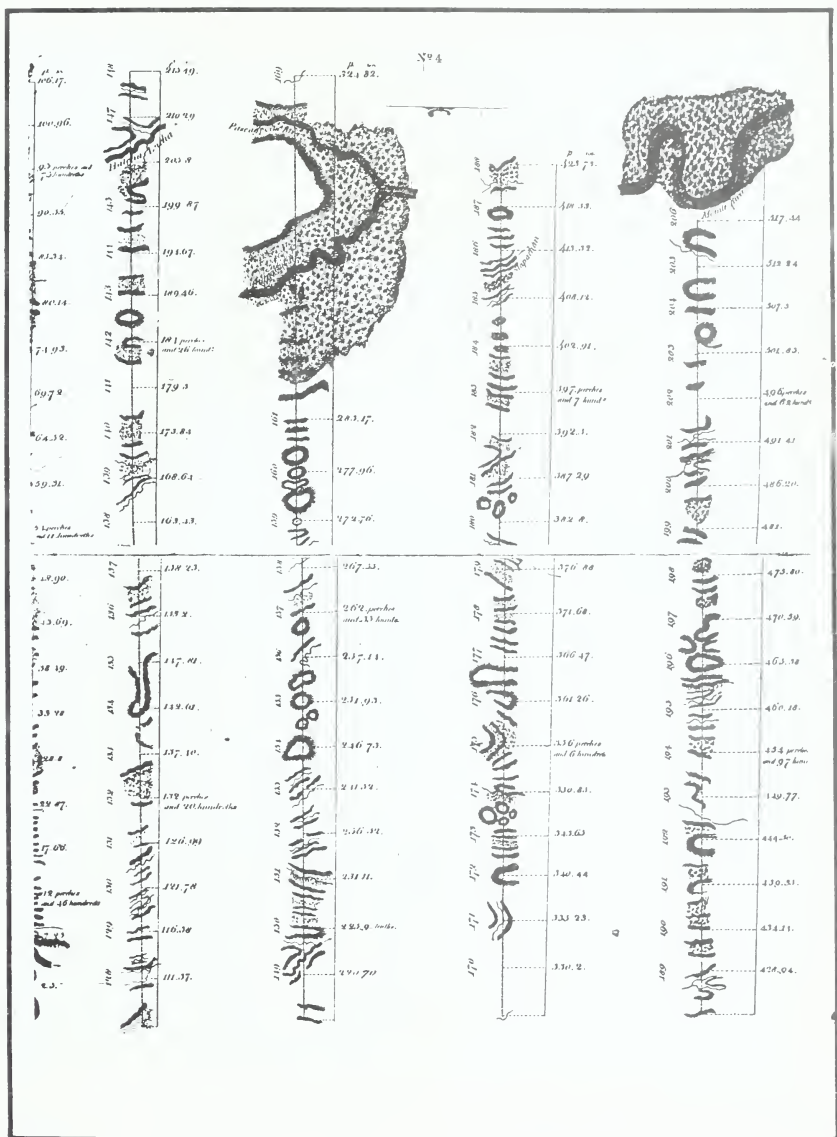


PLATE #8

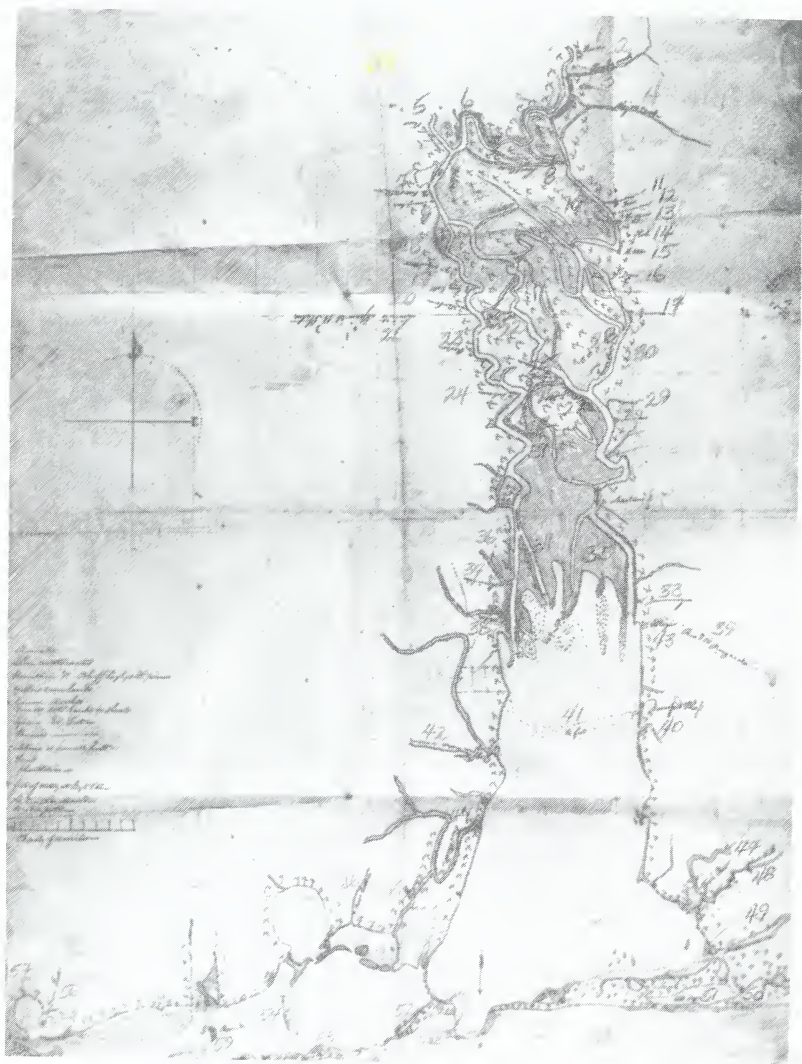


PLATE #9

THE FORT OF THE CONFEDERATION: THE SPANISH ON THE UPPER TOMBIGBEE

by

James P. Pate

In the late eighteenth century while Spanish and American diplomats harangued over a possible boundary in the Gulf country, a crudely fashioned frontier post was erected on the white bluffs of the Tombigbee River on the site of the old French Fort Tombecbe. In territory claimed by the young Republic, the Bourbon flag proudly flew in defiance of such claims. This small wooden, dirt, and chalk outpost on the northeastern fringe of a great Spanish Empire became a part of a defensive system designed to protect the Spanish provinces of Louisiana and West Florida. It became the unofficial capital of an Indian buffer state fashioned by Spanish officials to halt the expansion of land hungry American frontiersmen. The fact that it was erected despite conflicting territorial claims and extremely adverse conditions seems to provide further evidence to counteract the accepted view of Spanish bumbling and decadence. Yet this Spanish post, Fort Confederation, has generally been ignored or relegated to a footnote by most historians.¹

The strategic significance of the Upper Tombigbee River Valley in providing adequate defense for the provinces of Louisiana and West Florida was quickly noted by their new

¹See Arthur P. Whitaker, *The Spanish-American Frontier: 1783-1795; The Westward Movement and the Spanish Retreat in the Mississippi Valley* (Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1962, Reprint); Samuel F. Bemis, *Pinckney's Treaty: America's Advantage from Europe's Distress, 1783-1800* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965).

governor and intendant general, Francisco Luis Hector, Baron de Carondelet, who arrived in New Orleans December 30, 1791, with a reputation as an excellent administrator, and despite his detractors, his tenure at New Orleans was quite successful given the conditions and problems of his provinces. Like provincial governors before him, Carondelet faced a myriad of commercial, financial, and military problems. However, it was obvious that the weak defensive posture of his provinces was to be his most difficult task. The Mississippi River afforded an "invasion" route for American free-booters, French Jacobins, or the British from Canada. In addition, the rapid expansion of Americans into the Southwest Territory presented the threat of an American seizure of the Muscle Shoals region of the lower Tennessee River and the Chickasaw Bluffs on the Mississippi. American control of the Chickasaw Bluffs would endanger Spanish control over the navigation of the Mississippi. Americans upon the Muscle Shoals would be within short distance of the Upper Tombigbee and the route to Mobile. To counter these threats, Carondelet launched a three point program to provide adequate defense for his provinces by expanding the Mississippi River fleet, by organizing a Southern Indian Alliance, and by constructing several new posts in the lower Mississippi River Valley.²

Carondelet saw the Southern Indians as the cornerstone for the establishment of a viable defensive posture. He immediately set out to bring the Creeks, Chickasaws, Choctaws, and Cherokees into a defensive alliance with Spain. These four Indian nations were to become a buffer between the aggressive frontiersmen of the young Republic and his provinces. To attract the Creeks to the Bourbon flag, he appointed Pedro

²Jack D. L. Holmes, "Some Economic Problems of Spanish Governors in Louisiana," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, XLII (November, 1962), pp. 535-536; Carondelet's Military Report, New Orleans, 1794, in Despatches of the Spanish Governors, 11 vols., Typescript MSS in Howard-Tilton Memorial Library, Tulane University, XI, pp. 290-300 (hereinafter Despatches); Carondelet to Las Casas, New Orleans, August 3, 1793, *ibid.*, IX, p. 3; Pickering to Washington, Philadelphia, July 3, 1797, *American State Papers: Documents, Legislative and Executive* (38 vols., Washington, D. C.: Gales & Seaton, 1832-1861), *Foreign Relations*, 6 vols., II, pp. 66-67 (hereinafter *ASP*); Jefferson to Washington, Philadelphia, March 18, 1792, *ibid.*, I, pp. 252-257; see Jack D.L. Holmes, "The Ebb-Tide of Spanish Military Power on the Mississippi: Fort Fernando De Las Barrancas, 1795-1798," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, XXXVI (1964) pp. 23-44, and Abraham P. Nasatir, *Spanish War Vessels on the Mississippi, 1792-1796* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968).

Olivier as commissary with directions to dissuade them from attending American conferences and treaties, and to encourage their allegiance to Spain. He offered to John McDonald, a former British Indian agent, who was living among the Cherokees, the position of Spanish emissary to the Cherokee towns. Juan de la Villebeuvre and Benjamin Fooy received commissions to establish His Catholic Majesty as the protector of the Choctaw and Chickasaw nations. In an effort to aid their activities, he entered into an agreement with the British trading firm of Panton, Leslie, and Company for supplying trade goods to the Southern Indians. By 1792 Carondelet's efforts were being rewarded by visits of Southern Indian delegations to New Orleans who gave their assurances of their fealty to His Catholic Majesty. The Cherokee chief, Bloody Fellow, on a visit in 1792 urged the Spanish officials to establish posts at Muscle Shoals and on the site of the old French Fort Tombecbe.³

Within a year Villebeuvre had set Carondelet's plans in motion by negotiating the Treaty of Boucfouca. Juan Louis Fidele Farault de la Villebeuvre a native of Brittany had entered the Spanish army as a sub lieutenant in 1767, and when appointed as commissary to the Choctaw, he had reached the rank of captain of grenadiers in the Louisiana Regiment. Villebeuvre quickly proved to be one of the most capable Indian agents in the Spanish service. On May 10, 1793, an assembly of twenty-six large and small medal chiefs of the Small Party Choctaws signed the Treaty of Boucfouca. Villebeuvre, the interpreters, Simon Favre and Thomas Price, and two other Spaniards signed the treaty for His Catholic Majesty. By the treaty the Choctaws agreed to cede thirty square arpents of land (approximately twenty-five and a half acres) at the site of the old French Fort Tombecbe for the construction of a Spanish fort. In addition, the Choctaw-Spanish alliance was reaffirmed, and Villebeuvre promised the establishment of a trading post which would supply the Choctaws with trade goods.

³Olivier to Carondelet, Little Tallahassee, May 29, 1792, in Despatches, VIII, p. 61; Carondelet to Las Casas, New Orleans, November 20 and November 28, 1792, *ibid.*, pp. 257-258, 261-263; Carondelet to Chiefs, Warriors and others of the Cherokee Nation, New Orleans, November 24, 1792, *ibid.*, p. 362; McDonald to Carondelet, October 6, 1792, and April 5, 1793, *ibid.*, pp. 251, 386; Carondelet to Las Casas, New Orleans, October 1, 1793, *ibid.*, IX, p. 74; Panton, Leslie and Company to Carondelet, (1793), *ibid.*, XI pp. 22-25.

Villebeuvre's bluff site overlooking the Tombigbee River was not only linked southward to Mobile, but it would also afford the Spanish a middle position in arbitrating squabbles between the Chickasaws, Creeks, and Choctaws. A post at this site would give the Spanish a chance to undermine the strong American party among the Chickasaws who were closely tied to the Americans at Nashville and the proposed settlement in the Muscle Shoals area.⁴

Carondelet was ecstatic about the treaty and the construction of a new post. In a letter to Luis de Las Casas, captain general of Cuba, Carondelet praised the strategic importance of the white bluffs on which the new post was to be constructed. He saw it providing security to a vast territory drained by the Tombigbee, Mobile, Yazoo and Mississippi rivers. Moreover, the treaty and post were to further the Choctaw-Spanish alliance. His new fort would not only challenge the Americans, but it would also serve to strengthen Spanish claims to the Upper Gulf region. Before closing this glowing report, Carondelet proposed that Villebeuvre be rewarded by being brevetted lieutenant-colonel with the appropriate increase in salary and that Simon Favre, the interpreter, receive a salary increase of fifteen pesos monthly to raise his salary to sixty pesos.⁵

Despite the obvious seriousness of the frontier diplomacy conducted by Villebeuvre, he seems to have retained as much humor as objectivity. In writing of his difficulties, he reported, "you know the Choctaws . . . they are capable of going 100 leagues merely to get something to eat. We are not their masters; they do whatever they like, always saying yes; and although they always agree to what I tell them [they] always do as they please."⁶

⁴Villebeuvre to Carondelet, Boukfouka, April 18, 1793, in "Papers From the Spanish Archives Relating to Tennessee and the Old Southwest," edited and translated by D. C. Corbitt and Roberta Corbitt, East Tennessee Historical Society's *Publications*, XXXII (1960), p. 75 (hereinafter Corbitt, "Papers"); Villebeuvre to Gayoso, Boukfouka, May 12, 1793, *ibid.*, pp. 81-82; Carondelet to Las Casas, New Orleans, June 11, 1793, in *Despatches*, VII, pp. 404-405; Jack D.L. Holmes, "Spanish Treaties With West Florida Indians, 1784-1802," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XLVIII (October, 1969), p. 152.

⁵Carondelet to Las Casas, New Orleans, June 11, 1793, in *Despatches*, VIII, pp. 404-405.

⁶Villebeuvre to Gayoso, Boukfouka, May 25, 1793, in Corbitt, "Papers," XXXII, p. 92.

Carondelet's Indian agents and Manuel Luis Gayoso de Lemos, governor of the Natchez district, achieved the Indian alliance Carondelet sought at a remarkable Indian congress held at Fort Nogales (site of Vicksburg, Mississippi) in the fall of 1793. Gayoso, Villebeuvre, Favre, and Fooy negotiated the Treaty of Nogales which provided that the Chickasaws, Choctaws, Creeks, and Cherokees would "form an offensive and defensive alliance" under the protection of His Catholic Majesty. Each nation recognized the sovereignty of Spain in the Gulf and accepted Spain's pledge to protect them and preserve their lands. The treaty contained nineteen articles enumerating various pledges of friendship. It was formally signed on October 28, 1793, by five great medal chiefs representing the new Indian alliance, by Gayoso, and by eight witnesses, including Villebeuvre.⁷

The new confederacy of Southern Indians and His Catholic Majesty was quickly promoted by the construction of a military post on the old French Fort Tombecbe site which was called Fort Confederation in honor of the Nogales treaty. The construction of the post on the Upper Tombigbee was not accomplished without some difficulties. In fact, the first construction crew numbering several Negroes returned to Mobile before reaching the site when they encountered a group of drunken Indians. Undoubtedly their flight was aided by having heard all sorts of tales about the "savages" up river. However, by early May, seventeen Negroes had cut the timbers for the fort, and the site was being cleared for construction. The work crews were exposed to unusual heat according to Villebeuvre who wrote Carondelet that April, May, and June had passed without rain. Villebeuvre's efforts at the construction were hampered by an attack of jaundice. Added to the unusually dry, hot weather was a tempermental construction boss, Lieutenant Antonio Palao. It seems no one escaped Palao's wrath and at least one, the carpenter, Antonio Espejo, fled to Mobile where he later instituted legal action against

⁷Gayoso to Carondelet, Nogales, July 25, 1793, in Despatches, IX, pp. 10-13; Gayoso to Carondelet, Natchez, May 31, 1793, *ibid.*, XXXIII, p. 63; Treaty of Nogales, October 28, 1793, in Lawrence Kinnaird (ed.), *Spain in the Mississippi Valley, 1765-1794*, 3 parts, Vols. II, III, and IV, *Annual Report*, American Historical Association, 1945 (Washington, D. C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1946-1949), Pt. III, pp. 223-227; McDonald to Carondelet, Cherokees, April 20, 1794, *ibid.*, p. 268.

Palao. Perhaps the rains that descended on the little outpost in early July cooled off the irate Catalanian; at least they brought a respite from the oppressive heat. The July rains found the fort nearly completed except for roofs.⁸

Palao constructed a stockade on each side of the fort. On the river side, to the east, he placed three parapets with a swivel gun on each. By September he had constructed a stockade wall on the bluff's edge with a third bastion with a larger cannon placed on an esplanade four and one-half feet high. The stockade walls were built of cedar posts six inches square, seven to seven and one-half feet "above ground-level." The banquette was eighteen inches high and two and one-half feet wide "with a three inch base." The banquette were to be constructed of brick or limestone, and the rampart was constructed of limestone and earth. A moat of some size was created on the west and north in completing the rampart.⁹

There were two gates, one opening to the north and one opening to the river landing on the southeast. Supplies were apparently hauled up a very steep incline from the river through the latter gate. The north gate was the main gate and it was a double gateway. The arms of Spain were centered within the space above the archway with the legend, "Carlos IV reigning, Baron de Carondelet governing. In the year 1794."¹⁰

By early August, a number of buildings and other structures were being completed within the walls of the fort. The first floor of the blockhouse had been completed, and the "troop kitchen" had been framed and was ready to roof. The powder magazine of cement and mortar joining "stones," with an arched roof, was evidently finished. The officers' quarters, the commandant's quarters, and the commandant's kitchen were in various stages of completion. A chimney and "rock wall" had been added to the oven to prevent the storeroom

⁸Villebeuvre to Carondelet, Confederation, April 21, May 7, June 9, July 7, 1794, *ibid.*, pp. 269-270, 281-282, 315-317, 328; Villebeuvre to Gayoso, Boukfouca, May 8, 1794, *ibid.*, p. 284; Jack D. L. Holmes, "Spanish Military Commander in Colonial Alabama," *Journal of Alabama Academy of Science*, XXXVII (January, 1966), pp. 64-65.

⁹AGI, Maps and Plans, numbers 161, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, and 169.

¹⁰*Ibid.*

from catching on fire. A "stone" staircase with its hand-rail led down to the river on the northeast corner. A flag pole standing fifty-eight feet high was in place near the bastion on the southwest corner. Wooden out-houses were constructed on a small clearing near the river. The soldiers' barracks had been laid-out, but it was not completed and perhaps not even under construction.¹¹

The blockhouse, located on the west side between the two bastions, was typical of the wooden frontier forts constructed by Spain throughout the Mississippi Valley. Similar structures were built at Campo de Esperanza (at Hopefield, Arkansas, opposite Memphis, Tennessee) in 1797 and at Concordia (Vidalia, Louisiana, opposite Natchez, Mississippi) in 1800: The Fort Confederation blockhouse was intended for protection against a possible Indian attack but they were not considered adequate defense against a superior force, supported by artillery. The first floor was completed by June 25, 1794 and was used to station pickets by the sergeant-major. The second floor was probably completed by late August and was designed to hold four cannon with lines of fire to provide proper defense of the fort if attacked.¹²

The fort as constructed by Palao was not a startling example of military architecture. In fact, according to Villebeuvre, Palao erred in constructing the blockhouse, and his error was not discovered until after the cannon were mounted on the second floor of the two story blockhouse, when it became obvious that the line of fire was very poor. The buildings within the stockade were closely crowded and Villebeuvre complained as early as July 7, 1794, that the fort was too small. Moreover, Villebeuvre reported the oven (without a chimney) touched the storehouse and that sparks might easily set off a fire. This was evidently corrected by August with the construction of a chimney and wall of "stone." Space was so limited that he worried whether he might lodge the armorer within the fort as he had planned to lodge the surgeon. Already a shed for Indian visitors had been erected outside the gate, and the interpreter had requested an apartment at one end of it. By November, Carondelet was proposing to shore

¹¹*Ibid.*

¹²*Ibid.*

up the front of the post with dirt and that a rampart of stone and mortar be added. Carondelet also proposed that the native limestone be used as a building material.¹³

Whatever Fort Confederation lacked as a military post, it made up for by becoming a symbol of Spain's commitment to the Southern Indians. Even as trenches were being dug and as the stockade walls rose along the white bluffs of the Tombigbee, all manner of Southern Indians flocked to the new post. The Choctaws were especially pleased by the prospects of receiving their annual presents at the post rather than make the long trip to Mobile. Crop failures and food shortages found them present at the unfinished fort in growing numbers by June where they received corn and rice from Villebeuvre. The Choctaws faced real starvation after the loss of their second crop in two years. The dry spell had also prevented barges loaded with rice and corn from reaching Confederation, and Villebeuvre was forced to send pirogues down river to transfer the supplies to Confederation. Villebeuvre opened his own table to the Indians and used his own funds to help alleviate the crises. As Villebeuvre began to meet the Choctaw demands for food, they then started to press him for additional presents. Despite the obvious problems of navigating the Tombigbee, the lapses in filling requests for supplies in Mobile, and the instability of rum-filled Indians, Villebeuvre and Fort Confederation won the confidence of the Southern Indians and became a viable part of Carondelet's efforts to protect Spanish interests in the Gulf country.¹⁴

¹³Villebeuvre to Carondelet, Confederation, July 7, 1794, in Kinnaird (ed.), *Spain in the Mississippi Valley*, Pt. III, pp. 315-317; Carondelet's Military Report, New Orleans, 1794, in Despatches, XI, pp. 299-304; Jack D. L. Holmes, "French and Spanish Cartography of Alabama: Maps, Plans and Charts of Colonial Alabama in French and Spanish Archives," *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, XXVII (Spring and Summer, 1965), pp. 20-21; Palao to Carondelet, Confederation, June 24 and June 25, 1794, Archivo General de Indias, Papeles Procedentes de las Isla de Cuba, Jack D. L. Holmes — Microfilm Research Project, Copy in University of Southern Mississippi Library, Hattiesburg, legajo 29. (Hereinafter A.G.I., P.C.).

¹⁴Gayoso to Villebeuvre, Natchez, May 22, 1794, in Corbitt, "Papers," XXXIX (1967), pp. 98-100; Carondelet to Villebeuvre, New Orleans, June 4, 1794, *ibid.*, p. 101; Villebeuvre to Carondelet, Confederation, April 21, May 7, June 9, July 7, July 22, September 14, October 27, and December 23, 1794, in Kinnaird (ed.), *Spain in the Mississippi Valley*, Pt. III, pp. 270, 280-281, 298-299, 315-317, 327, 340-341, 367, 382-384.

The new Spanish post was not only attracting large Indian delegations, but a sizeable group of Europeans also made the post the center of their activities. In addition to Villebeuvre, there were several officers, traders, interpreters, Negro slaves, and some forty garrison troops. One early visitor to the post was Major Gilberto Guillemard an engineer who is best remembered for designing the Cabildo and the Presbytere in New Orleans. Guillemard was evidently on an inspection tour for he reported to Carondelet that it would take six months to complete Confederation. At least one trader-interpreter, Simon Favre might be given some credit for bringing the cattle industry to west Alabama. Favre settled at the Tombecbe site during the winter of 1793-1794 and seems to have prospered to the point of establishing a small herd of cattle. Favre also operated a small trading post near the fort. Favre was joined by many others such as Turner Brashears, Thomas Price, and John Joyce, who served as interpreters and also engaged in trading activities.¹⁵ Post life for the average soldier or even the officers does not seem to have been very pleasant. The post commandant Palao remained at Confederation until December, 1794, when he was relieved of command by his own petition to Carondelet who transferred him to the command of San Esteban. Palao had written Carondelet that his family was suffering and asked that he be transferred to "a small corner where he could plant corn to fill the bellies of his children."¹⁶

At least one Spanish officer, Juan Antonio Bassot, arrived at and left Confederation under more unusual circumstances than Palao. Bassot was something of an eccentric who was called "a crazy degenerate" by Carondelet. Because of differences with Captain Manuel de Lanzos, the commandant at

¹⁵Carondelet to Villebeuvre, New Orleans, June 14, 1794, in Corbitt, "Papers," XL (1968), p. 103; Favre to Lanzos, Tombecbe, January 20, 1794, in Kinnaird (ed.), *Spain in the Mississippi Valley*, Pt. III, pp. 249-250; Carondelet to Villebeuvre, New Orleans, April 23, 1794, *ibid.*, p. 271; Villebeuvre to Carondelet, Confederation, July 7, 1794, *ibid.*, pp. 316-317; Jack D. L. Holmes, *Gayoso: The Life of a Spanish Governor in the Mississippi Valley, 1789-1799* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1965), p. 154; Jack D. L. Holmes, "Some French Engineers in Spanish Louisiana," in John Francis McDermott (ed.), *The French in the Mississippi Valley* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965), pp. 124-128.

¹⁶Holmes, "Spanish Military Commanders," pp. 62-65; Villebeuvre to Carondelet, Confederation, July 7, 1794, in Kinnaird (ed.), *Spain in the Mississippi Valley*, Pt. III, p. 315.

Mobile, he had been relieved of his command at San Esteban and given orders to report to Pensacola. Instead of traveling east to Pensacola, he moved up the Tombigbee River to Fort Confederation. The touring officer was escorted out of the Choctaw country to Fort Nogales. Bassot's tour of the Tombigbee and Confederation area caused his superiors, Gayoso and Carondelet, all manner of discomfort. Despite pleas to remove him from service, the Tombigbee visitor would remain in the army until 1798, when he was discharged on a pension of fifteen dollars a month.¹⁷

A visit by an eccentric such as Bassot must have been something of a welcome release from the usual problems faced by Villebeuvre and his frontier community. His correspondence with Carondelet, Gayoso, and Lanzos reveals that he was continually harrassed by frictions between Spain's Indian allies. If small bands of Choctaws, Creeks, or Chickasaws were not at odds with one another, they were at Confederation demanding better goods or stealing the horses and cattle of the traders. Even Villebeuvre's horse was stolen, presenting the prospect of His Catholic Majesty's commissary to the Choctaws having to walk to the nation on his annual tour. There never seemed to be enough food, Limburg cloth, ammunition, blankets, rum, or trinkets to please the continual parade of Indian visitors to Confederation. On one occasion, two Chickasaws, Mingopouscouche and Nanhoulmastabe, asked for Spanish flags to fly over their towns since they had used their old flags to cover the bodies of their dead wives. Mingopouscouche also requested a saddle for his horse and a red uniform which Villebeuvre did not possess or promise. When not occupied at ministering to Spain's red allies, Villebeuvre sought medicines for the post, candles for the officers, and capes for the sentries. After less than nine months of the above, Villebeuvre was forgetting to number, date, or even sign his correspondence to Carondelet.¹⁸

¹⁷Carondelet to Las Casas, New Orleans, January 26, 1795, in Despatches, V, p. 104; Holmes, "Spanish Military Commanders," p. 66.

¹⁸Villebeuvre to Carondelet, Confederation, May 7, July 7, July 22, September 14, October 27, and December 23, 1794, in Kinnaird (ed.), *Spain in the Mississippi Valley*, Pt. III, pp. 280-281, 317, 327, 340-341, 367-368, 382-384; Villebeuvre to Gayoso, Boukfouca, May 8, 1794, *ibid.*, pp. 284-285; Carondelet to Las Casas, New Orleans, February 3 and March 30, 1795, in Despatches, XI, pp. 313, 310; Carondelet to Villebeuvre, New Orleans, June 14, 1794, in Corbitt, "Papers," XL, p. 103.

Villebeuvre's problems were further complicated by the outbreak of hostilities between the Chickasaws and Creeks early in the new year 1795. The war was much more than the renewal of hostilities between two old enemies. Villebeuvre and Carondelet quickly saw the conflict as a much deeper and more threatening affair. The Chickasaws led by Piomingo, who was very closely linked to traders and land speculators in Nashville, had precipitated the violence by attacking a Creek hunting party. As hostilities raged, a group of Americans moved down from Nashville and started the construction of a post at the Muscle Shoals. The Indian war was a threat to Carondelet's Indian confederacy. The American post at Muscle Shoals could threaten Fort Confederation and further erode the Spanish influence within the Chickasaw Nation. Moreover, the Americans at Muscle Shoals were only a three day's march overland from the Chickasaw Bluffs on the eastern bank of the Mississippi where an American post could threaten Spanish navigation and defense of upper Louisiana.¹⁹

The American efforts had not been totally unexpected and in fact, Carondelet probably precipitated them by his own plans to establish a post on the bluffs near the mouth of Wolf River. The Treaty of Nogales in 1793 had found the Chickasaw representatives imploring the Spanish in article nine to deliver their annual presents in the nation "on the bank of the Mississippi." Benjamin Fooy was directed to reduce the influence of Piomingo by giving complete aid and support to Ugulayacabe who was pro-Spanish and a signer of the Nogales treaty. Governor Gayoso de Lemos of Natchez further instructed Fooy to gain Ugulayacabe's consent to raise a force of six hundred Chickasaws that could be used to defend the Natchez district and to a cession on the Chickasaw Bluffs for a Spanish post where their annual presents could be distributed. Fooy's efforts were greatly aided by Villebeuvre's activities at Fort Confederation where he continually cultivated the friendship of the Chickasaws. Carondelet wasted little effort in establishing a Spanish post on the bluffs by dispatching Gayoso himself to consummate the establishment of the post. On May 30, 1795, the Bourbon banner of Spain was raised above the hastily con-

¹⁹Carondelet to Las Casas, New Orleans, March 30, 1795, and (May, 1795), in Despatches, XI, pp. 310-311, 313-314.

structed Fort San Fernando de las Barrancas.²⁰

Now Carondelet had two outposts deep in territory claimed by the United States. San Fernando de las Barrancas and Confederation carried out dual roles as military posts and as frontier ministries from which Spanish agents attempted to maintain the tenuous Indian buffer. The posts were symbols of the Spanish commitment but more importantly, they showed the Indians that the Spanish "talks" were honest. Unlike the Americans, the building of Spanish posts did not bring in a horde of land seekers. Even the Choctaws recognized that a Spanish fort was of little threat when compared to the American frontiersmen who constantly wanted more dirt from the Indians. The American expansion to the Muscle Shoals brought a Choctaw delegation to Confederation begging Villebeuvre not to leave the post and let the Americans take over.²¹

For over three years Carondelet had worked diligently to halt American expansion and hold the Gulf country for His Catholic Majesty. In March, 1795, he proposed to strengthen San Esteban on the lower Tombigbee so that communication between Confederation and Mobile could be maintained. He ordered four long cannons with carriages, balls, and tools so that Confederation would be defended by six pieces and San Esteban by four. Yet even as he laid plans to refurbish San Esteban and strengthen Confederation, the Creek-Chickasaw War was threatening to destroy the Indian confederacy which was so vital to the defense of Louisiana and West Florida. His wooden and dirt posts seemed doomed to be overrun by land hungry frontiersmen, the American army, or by

²⁰Carondelet to Las Casas, New Orleans, (May, 1795), *ibid.*, XI, p. 314; Villebeuvre to Carondelet, Confederation, September 14, 1794, in Kinnaid (ed.), *Spain in the Mississippi Valley*, Pt. III, pp. 340-341; "Dairy of Gayoso de Lemos' Epedition on *La Vigilante*," in Nasatir, *Spanish War Vessels*, pp. 253-278. See Jack D. L. Holmes, "Spanish American Rivalry Over the Chickasaw Bluffs, 1780-1795," East Tennessee Historical Society's *Publications*, XXXIV (1962), pp. 26-57, and "The Ebb-Tide of Spanish Military Power on the Mississippi: Fort San Fernando de las Barrancas," *ibid.*, XXXVI (1964), pp. 23-44. Gayoso's presence was noted in the March 2, 1796, issue of the *Knoxville Gazette* by the "Extract of a letter from Kentucky to a gentleman in this city (Richmond)," November 4, 1795.

²¹Carondelet to Las Casas, New Orleans, March 30, 1795, in *Despatches*, XI, pp. 310-312.

an army of free-booters recruited by French Jacobins.²²

While Carondelet concerned himself with defending the Spanish Gulf claims against a growing number of claimants, Villebeuvre continued his effective ministrations at Fort Confederation with the Southern Indians. On November 26, 1795, he completed a census of the Choctaws which numbered 15 great medal chiefs, 30 small medal chiefs, 74 captains and important sub-chiefs, 2,198 warriors, 2,360 women, and 3,193 children (total of 7,870). When not occupied with his census work, Villebeuvre continued to receive Indian delegations who confessed loyalty to Spain and asked for presents or food, often in the same breath. The food supply at Confederation demanded his constant attention because of the time, distance, and problems always encountered in trying to replenish the supply from Mobile. In addition, his correspondence with Carondelet, Gayoso, and other Spanish officials demanded much of his time. Everyday seemed to demand a count of the medicine, rice, corn, trinkets, capes, or some other articles that he was responsible for ordering and dispensing. When a question was raised about his effectiveness, he quickly offered to resign in the spring of 1796. The Frenchman had suffered enough for His Catholic Majesty, but Carondelet reassured him of his usefulness and asked him to remain at Fort Confederation.²³

Even as Villebeuvre talked of resigning his position at Confederation, Carondelet was proposing a rather drastic plan to Luis de las Casas, captain general of Cuba, who was his immediate superior and his brother-in-law. Carondelet proposed calling a congress of the Southern Indians, either at Confederation or at Nogales. All the principal chiefs would be called together in order to arm their nations in the defense of Louisiana and West Florida. Until now, Carondelet had generally urged the Southern Indians to remain at peace with

²²*Ibid.*; Carondelet to Las Casas, New Orleans, (May, 1795), *ibid.*, pp. 313-314; Carondelet to (Las Casas), March 30, 1795, *ibid.*, V, p. 158; Carondelet to Las Casas, New Orleans, March 30, 1796, *ibid.*, XI, pp. 308-309; McDonald to Carondelet, Cherokees, December 31, 1795, *ibid.*, p. 253.

²³Choctaw Census of 1795, Fort Confederation, November 26, 1795, by Juan de la Villebeuvre and Simon Favre, in Jack D. L. Holmes, "The Choctaws in 1795," *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, XXX (Spring, 1968), pp. 34-46; Villebeuvre to Carondelet, Confederation, March 8, 1796, A.G.I., P.C. leg. 129.

the United States while resisting American demands for land cessions. Carondelet felt this drastic action necessary if the aggressive Americans were not to seize "the immense continent closed in by the Atlantic Ocean, the Ohio, the Mississippi, and the Gulf of Mexico." Carondelet meant to hold on to this territory even at the expenditure of 200,000 pesos to arm the Indians and an additional 100,000 pesos each year to continue this armed Indian buffer. He was certain that money and muskets could hold the eastern part of Louisiana and West Florida. Unless these steps were taken, Carondelet predicted that "before this century is past, Spain will infallibly lose the dominion of the Mississippi and the gulf coasts from the mouth of that river to the doors of Florida."²⁴

While Carondelet, Gayoso, and Villebeuvre labored to keep the Bourbon flag aloft over the Gulf country, their efforts were being obliterated by the Treaty of San Lorenzo. The Spanish Council of State concerned that the United States was about to declare war on Spain decided to negotiate a treaty settling the boundary dispute over the Gulf country. On October 27, 1795, the Spanish minister, Manuel de Godoy, and the American minister to Spain, Thomas Pinckney, made the appeasement effort permanent by signing a treaty which provided that Spain would cede all her claims to territory north of the thirty-first parallel and surrender control over the Mississippi River. The treaty came at time when the young Republic could ill afford an all out war, and at a time when Spanish defenses in Louisiana and West Florida were at their strongest.²⁵

Although news of the treaty reached the Gulf frontier by March, 1796, Carondelet did not receive Godoy's orders to execute the treaty until midsummer. Even then Carondelet hesitated and protested to Godoy that Spain had given up too much. Gayoso seemed to have suffered even greater shock and wrote even stronger protests that to execute the treaty would cause irreparable damage to Spain's border provinces. Despite the firm conviction that a great error had been made,

²⁴Carondelet to Las Casas, New Orleans, March 30, 1796, in *Despatches*, XI, pp. 308-309.

²⁵Treaty of San Lorenzo el Real, October 27, 1795, *ASP*, I, pp. 546-549; Holmes, *Gayoso*, pp. 174-176. See the correspondence of Pinckney, Godoy, and others relative to the treaty in *ASP*, I, pp. 533-546.

Carondelet began to formulate plans for the evacuation of the Spanish posts above the thirty-first parallel, San Fernando de las Barrancas, Nogales, Natchez, Confederation, and San Esteban. Carondelet knew the evacuation of San Fernando de las Barrancas and Confederation deep in the Indian country might be attended by some violence. The Chickasaws and Choctaws were sure to be very bitter and resentful. The chiefs who had agreed to their construction were pro-Spanish, and now they were to be taken over by the Americans. Hoping to prevent a clash of the garrisons and the Indians, Carondelet sent secret dispatches calling for the speedy evacuations of San Esteban, Confederation, Nogales, and San Fernando de las Barrancas. Natchez was to be evacuated after Gayoso had helped complete the surveying of the new international boundary.²⁶

Carondelet's secret orders to evacuate and destroy Fort Confederation reached Villebeuvre in late February, 1797. Even at a time of surrender and defeat, Villebeuvre was busy writing in defense of a contract he had made with Simon Favre for supplying fresh meat for the post. Fort Confederation was evacuated on March 17, 1797, and Villebeuvre led the Spanish retreat from the Upper Tombigbee down river to San Esteban. By the time the Confederation garrison reached San Esteban, Carondelet had received new directives from Godoy to hold up the evacuation of the posts above the thirty-first parallel. Those orders arrived too late to prevent the evacuation of San Fernando de las Barrancas and Confederation. For the next year, Carondelet and Gayoso delayed further withdrawal in the vain hope that the treaty might be revised to Spain's advantage.²⁷

²⁶Carondelet to Gayoso, New Orleans, February 11, 1797, in Mississippi Provincial Archives, Spanish Dominion (9 volumes of transcripts), Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, VI, pp. 324-327; Jack D. L. Holmes, "Notes on the Spanish Fort San Esteban De Tombeche," *Alabama Review*, XVIII (October, 1965), p. 289; Holmes, *Gayoso*, pp. 176-180; Arthur P. Whitaker, *The Mississippi Question, 1795-1803: A Study in Trade, Politics, and Diplomacy* (Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1962, Reprint), pp. 52-55, 280-284 (notes 6, 7, and 10); Holmes, "The Ebb-Tide of Spanish Military Power on the Mississippi," pp. 36-37; "Extract of a letter from a gentleman in Philadelphia to his friend in Hager's Town," January 25, 1796, in *Knoxville Gazette*, March 2, 1796.

²⁷Villebeuvre to Carondelet, Confederation, February 15, 1797, A.G.I., P.C. Leg. 129; Whitaker, *The Mississippi Question*, pp. 280-284 (notes 6, 7, 10 and 29); Holmes, "San Esteban de Tombeche," pp. 285-289; Holmes, "Spanish Military Commanders," p. 61.

The Spanish had maintained Fort Confederation on the Upper Tombigbee less than three years. Carondelet's crudely fashioned frontier post became a victim of an international treaty. But Carondelet himself had maintained that it was responsible for holding back American seizure of the Gulf. Moreover, its surrender was arranged by a treaty consummated in Europe not in the Spanish Gulf. Its evacuation and the erosion of the Indian buffer fulfilled Carondelet's prediction of American control of the Mississippi to the Gulf by the new century. The Spanish retreat from the Upper Tombigbee heralded the end of Alabama's Spanish colonial period. However, the strategic significance of Fort Confederation was not obliterated as easily. The United States government established an Indian factory at or near the site in 1816, and the Indians once again gathered at the white bluffs to receive presents and talks.²⁸

²⁸This article was presented as a paper at the annual meeting of the Alabama Historical Association in Birmingham on April 28, 1972.

NEWSPAPERS AND NEWSPAPER MEN DURING TUSCALOOSA'S CAPITAL PERIOD, 1826-1846

by

Robert H. McKenzie

From 1826 to 1846 Tuscaloosa served as Alabama's fourth political capital, its second as a state.¹ As the hub of the state's political affairs, Tuscaloosa attracted both the controversies and the controversialists of the day. Political debate within the strong two party system prevailing by 1840 produced two (sometimes more) competing newspapers. These papers both attracted and produced men with a flair for writing and debate. Consequently, the newspapers and their progenitors provided a significant portion of the infrastructure for the molding of public opinion and the conduct of public affairs.

Tracing the overlapping histories of these papers and the men who managed them can be confusing. During the capital period, a dozen or so newspapers vied for attention and survival. A precise statement of numbers is difficult since some publishing ventures lasted only a few issues. Moreover, owners and editors changed frequently, often from one newspaper to another. Failures and mergers were also frequent. The dozen or so newspapers of the period are overlaid with the lives of more than thirty personalities, many of them associated

¹See William H. Brantley, *Three Capitals: A Book about the First Three Capitals of Alabama, St. Stephens, Huntsville, and Cahawba* (Boston: Merrymont Press, 1947), pp. 204-207.

with several different newspapers in the twenty-year period.²

To bring some order to this welter, we will first examine the common features of journalism during Tuscaloosa's capital period. Then we will examine the groupings that can be made of the newspapers in terms of chronology and political focus. Finally, we will look at some of the major personalities of Tuscaloosa's newspaper scene prior to 1846.

The newspapers that served Tuscaloosa prior to 1846 had several common characteristics. First, they all were of about the same appearance, although differing somewhat in size. Print was arranged in one-column wide sections; each page was from 6 to 8 columns wide. To give variety in appearance, editors commonly used two types of print on each page, but illustrations were few. An early printer might have three or four woodcuts — a house, a stage coach, a fugitive slave, or other simple device — that could be inserted in advertisements to provide a bare measure of animation in appearance. As time passed, the range of illustrations became more plentiful and elaborate. Four pages were common, with advertisements usually on the first and third pages. In the absence of latter-day wire services, editors relied greatly on copied material from other domestic and foreign newspapers. When mails were slow and political events sparse, editors were prone to argue with competitors to provide filler material. The primary focus was upon politics, at the expense of local news and literary materials. Editors often printed important political speeches, legislative acts, and judicial decisions verbatim. With rare exceptions, all newspapers were weeklies. Wednesdays, Fridays, or Saturdays were common days of issue. Sometimes, a session of the legislature or an attempt to drive off a competitor would produce two issues per week for a time,

²Basic references for the study of antebellum newspapers in Alabama are: Rhoda Coleman Ellison, *A Check List of Alabama Imprints, 1807-1870* (University, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 1946) and *Early Alabama Publications: A Study in Literary Interests* (University, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 1947) and W. W. Screws, "Alabama Journalism," *Memorial Record of Alabama* (2 vols.; Madison, Wisc.: Brant and Fuller, 1893), II, 158-235. For Tuscaloosa in particular, see Mary E. Hill, "A Study of the Leading Newspapers in Tuscaloosa, 1837-1865, and Their Political Importance," (M.A. thesis, University of Alabama, 1951) and Elizabeth L. Simms, "A Study of the *Flag of the Union*, A Tuscaloosa, Alabama, Newspaper, 1833-43: Its Importance and Influence," (M.A. thesis, University of Alabama, 1950).

but these experiments never became continuing practice.³

The rhythm of a basically rural economy drove the newspapers and the events they reported. The legislature met annually in the fall following harvest, beginning in November or December and extending into late December or January. Special sessions were called in 1832, 1837, and 1841. Even the University of Alabama, which opened for classes in Tuscaloosa in 1831, adapted to the pattern imposed on the town by nature and politics. During the capital period, commencement was held in December rather than in the summer. With minor modifications over the years, the University recessed from Christmas to early spring and again from late July to early fall.⁴

Political activity was constant. Elections of some sort were held every year: state legislative elections annually, congressional elections in even years, and presidential caucuses every leap year. This pace insured spirited newspaper comment. Editors focused on national political races, somewhat on state issues, and hardly ever on local elections.

All Tuscaloosa's newspapers struggled financially. All charged about the same: usually \$4 for a year's subscription in advance; \$5 a year otherwise. Advertising was sold by the column square of ten, twelve, or fifteen lines: usually \$1 for the first appearance and 50¢ for subsequent insertions. Editors frequently appealed to subscribers and advertisers to pay debts. Circulation figures are impossible to gauge with accuracy. The newspapers occasionally made unverifiable claims. The population of Tuscaloosa in 1826 was approximately 1,500. The census of 1840 recorded 3,046 persons. In 1846, the city's last year as capital, the population was about 4,500. By 1850 the population had fallen to 1,950.⁵ Even at its peak, this population was inadequate to support the

³Major repositories for Tuscaloosa's newspapers prior to 1846 are the Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama, and the Amelia Gayle Gorgas Library, University of Alabama, University, Alabama. Files for each paper for some years are complete, for other years intermittent.

⁴James B. Sellers, *History of the University of Alabama* (University, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 1953), 139-41.

⁵*Compendium of the Sixth Census* (Washington, D.C.: Thomas Allen, 1841), 52-54. Also see Matthew W. Clinton, *Tuscaloosa, Alabama: Its Early Days, 1816-1865* (Tuscaloosa: The Zonta Club, 1958), 65, 81.

number of newspapers that competed for its attention. State-wide appeal as a party organ at the capital, designation as state printer, and promotion of political controversy to attract readers were therefore important elements of the contest for survival.

The history of Tuscaloosa's newspapers prior to 1846 can be grouped into four chronological periods. The first of these was an initial period extending from 1819 (pre-capital) to 1829. By the latter year basic competitors had emerged. Only one newspaper had been established in the pre-capital years: the *Republican* (1819), later the *American Mirror* (1820-27), later the *Chronicle* (1827-29). The *Sentinel* competed with the *Chronicle* from 1827 to 1829, when both failed and were succeeded by the *Alabama State Intelligencer* and the *Spirit of the Age*.

The second period occurred between 1829 and 1834. The *Intelligencer* and the *Spirit* were first joined by two new competitors, then the total of four papers was reduced to two by a series of mergers. The first new competitor, the *Inquirer*, resulted from a split in the *Intelligencer's* management in 1831. The *State Rights and Free Trade Expositor* was established in 1832 and quickly merged with the *Spirit* to form the *Spirit of the Age and State Rights Expositor*. This paper in turn merged in 1834 with the *Intelligencer* (which also carried for a time *State Rights Expositor* on its banner). Meanwhile, the *Inquirer* failed, and its creditors formed a successor, the *Flag of the Union*.

The third period occurred from 1834 to 1842. During these eight years, the *Flag* grew in strength, while the *Intelligencer* waned. In 1837 a new paper was established, the *Independent Monitor*, which by 1840 supplanted the *Intelligencer* (The latter was known in its last days as the *Whig*). By 1840 Tuscaloosa's two newspapers were the *Flag* and the *Independent Monitor*.

During the final period (1842 to 1846) the *Flag* encountered financial difficulties and a Democratic competitor, the *Banner of Alabama* in 1842. The *Flag* weathered the brief competition, but then changed owners, names, and philosophies

to become the *Alabama State Journal and Flag* in 1843. The *Flag's* original aims were sustained briefly from late 1843 to late 1844 by the *Democratic Gazette*. The failure of the *Gazette* left the *Journal and Flag* and the *Independent Monitor* to compete until removal of the capital to Montgomery in 1846.

This brief chronological outline can be fleshed out by referring to the political philosophies of the newspapers during these years. Four guiding philosophies can be discerned. One was the vaguest, that of independent, shading toward one of the other three in any given case. The other positions were union Democrat, state-rights Democrat, and Whig.⁶

The earliest newspapers must be classified as independent. Party lines were not firmly drawn in the 1820s, and there was little politically to distinguish the *Chronicle* and the *Sentinel* between 1827 and 1829.

Succeeding papers could be more clearly defined politically, but their stances often shifted with events. The *Intelligencer* began as an union-oriented Democratic paper. Its original editor established a competitor, the *Inquirer*, which was even more strongly pro-union. The *Inquirer's* successor, the *Flag*, consistently maintained the tradition for union and the Democracy.

The *Intelligencer*, however, became more state-rights in its orientation in 1831-32 as the central question for Alabamians shifted from the less immediate issue of nullification in South Carolina to Federal delays in removing Indians from Alabama. The *Spirit of the Age* likewise became more state-rights oriented. Neither the *Intelligencer* nor the *Spirit of the Age* matched the brief life of the *State Rights and Free Trade Expositor* in adhering to nullification as advocated by John C. Calhoun. In 1834 when the *Expositor* merged with the *Intelligencer*, the Calhoun wing of the Democratic party no longer had a clear voice in Tuscaloosa, since the *Intelligencer's* state-rights fervor had waned.

⁶For an introduction to the political background, see the useful but somewhat outdated Theodore H. Jack, *Sectionalism and Party Politics in Alabama, 1819-1842* (Menasha, Wisc.: Banta Publishing Co., 1919).

The *Intelligencer* then drifted, through a succession of owners, toward the Whig position. By 1840 the *Independent Monitor* (in spite of the first word of its title) was challenging the *Intelligencer* for open leadership of the Whig following. The *Intelligencer's* belated attempt to establish a constituency by renaming itself the *Whig* was too late.

Meanwhile, the *Flag* had remained staunchly for the pro-union wing of the Democratic party. By 1842 the state-rights faction was again gaining strength, although Tuscaloosa had strong union sentiments in both the Democratic and Whig parties. The efforts of the Calhoun wing to establish a voice in Tuscaloosa led state-rights advocates to purchase the *Flag* and convert it as the *Journal and Flag*, into an organ for their position in 1843. The failure of the *Democratic Gazette*, quickly organized to replace the *Flag* as a union Democrat organ, symbolized changes taking place in the state as a whole. Underscoring the point is the fact that the *Flag* had won designation as state printer by the legislature every year of its existence until 1842, when the *Banner of Alabama* briefly held the honor. In January, 1844 the *Democratic Gazette* lost the contest for state printing to the new *Journal and Flag*. With the failure of the *Gazette* in December, 1844, Union men in Tuscaloosa had little recourse except to the Whig party and its voice, the *Independent Monitor*. The decline of the Whig party and the playing out of this scenario to secession is beyond the scope of this paper.

A third way of understanding the newspaper scene in Tuscaloosa during the capital period is to focus upon the newspapermen themselves. Of the thirty plus men who served as owners, publishers, and editors, a handful stand out for their personalities and for the ways their careers illuminate understanding of antebellum journalism in Alabama. Unfortunately, biographical material for most of these figures is limited. Furthermore, it seems possible that much "editing" and other writing was performed anonymously by various persons in Tuscaloosa.⁷

⁷Screws, "Alabama Journalism," *Memorial Record*, II, 174, for example, says that the noted University of Alabama professor, F. A. P. Barnard, once simultaneously "edited" two competing newspapers, producing a vehement "argument" between the two editors leading to the brink of a duel.

Thomas M. Davenport began Tuscaloosa's first newspaper, the *Republican*, in 1819. Davenport was an improvident printer, not an editor, and the driving force in his venture appeared to be his older daughter, Eliza. She and her sister did much of the press work. Eliza married a Scotchman named Dugald McFarlane, described by a contemporary as "strong-minded . . . with little education or information, and less energy or perseverance . . . sorely beset with the sin of intemperance."⁸ McFarlane became co-owner and editor of the paper, known by 1827 as the *Chronicle*. McFarlane secured designation as state printer for the first session of the legislature in Tuscaloosa, and Thomas M. Davenport was assigned to the legislature as reporter. The rival *Sentinel*, brought to Tuscaloosa in 1827 from Huntsville, by Thomas Grantland, hired young Washington Moody to report the legislature. Moody later became a prominent banker in the city. McFarlane soon angered the town with some editorial comments and moved to Mobile, ending the *Chronicle's* run in Tuscaloosa.⁹

Wesley and Hugh McGuire hastened the demise of the *Chronicle* and the *Sentinel* by founding Tuscaloosa's first sustained journalistic success, the *Alabama State Intelligencer* in 1829. The McGuires of Tuscaloosa and a third obscure partner, William E. Henry, secured the state printing contract for the legislative session of 1829. The McGuires had published a paper at Cahaba. After fulfilling the contract to print the *Acts and Journals* of the legislature, their firm began printing the *Intelligencer* in March, 1829. Their editor was Erasmus Walker, perhaps not uncoincidentally a member of the legislature from Dallas county from 1827 to 1829.

Walker bought out Hugh McGuire before the end of 1829 and a year later sold his interest to Thomas H. Wiley, an employee. Walker and Wiley soon disagreed heatedly over the

⁸William R. Smith, *Reminiscences of a Long Life: Historical, Political, Personal and Literary* (Washington, D.C.: William R. Smith, Sr., 1889), 24.

⁹The incident is discussed in bare detail by Ellison, *Early Alabama Publications*, 31, quoting the *Alabama State Intelligencer*, August 28, 1829. The known surviving issues of the *Chronicle* for (July 6 and 20 and August 10), 1829, do not contain McFarlane's offensive comments. The July 20 issue, however, contains the only hint of local controversy, a long letter to the editor opposing an attempt by the legislature "to force obedience to certain rules of the Society for the promotion of temperance." It may be that that McFarlane's indiscretion had something to do with this matter.

terms of Walker's continuing relationship with the *Intelligencer* until the state printing for 1830 had been completed. In December, 1830, Walker began his own paper, the *Inquirer*. Both papers became battle grounds for trading personal and political insults. In the early 1830s, Walker leaned toward the union Democrat position, while Wiley and Alexander M. Robinson (about whom more later), editor of the town's third paper, the *Spirit of the Age*, quarrelled over primary advocacy of the state-rights position. As mentioned, Alabama's quarrel with the Federal government over release of former Indian lands to white settlers encouraged state-rights sentiments. Advocacy of the state-rights position, however, soon became clearly identified in the Tuscaloosa press.

Richard T. Brumby was involved in the newspaper business for only a few years, but he introduced decisively the state-rights Democrat position to Tuscaloosa. A graduate of South Carolina College in 1824, and a lawyer in his native state for a number of years, Brumby moved to Alabama in 1831, first to Montgomery and then to Tuscaloosa. In November, 1832, he began publishing the *States Rights and Free Trade Expositor* to espouse John C. Calhoun's theory of nullification and to defend South Carolina's position in its controversy with President Andrew Jackson over enforcement of the tariff laws. In December he purchased the *Spirit of the Age* from Alexander M. Robinson an associate and began publishing the *Spirit of the Age and States Rights Expositor*. He published this paper until 1834 when he was offered the chair of chemistry, mineralogy, and geology in the University of Alabama. Brumby sold his paper to Alexander M. Robinson, and John G. Davenport of the *Intelligencer*. After leaving the *Spirit*, Robinson had succeeded Wiley at the *Intelligencer*. Brumby remained at the University for fifteen years until his appointment to the faculty of South Carolina College in 1849.¹⁰

Another editor who made his mark in fields other than

¹⁰Thomas M. Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography* (4 vols.; Chicago: S. J. Clarke, 1921), III, 240. A fervent secessionist, Brumby sold most of his possessions and invested all in Confederate bonds. Age and ill health kept him from military service, but he sent all five of his sons (the youngest fifteen years old) into Confederate service. His extensive collection of rocks, minerals, shells, etc., is housed at Davidson University. On his newspaper career, see also Simms, "A Study of the *Flag of the Union*," 12-14, 28. On his career at the University, see Sellers, *A History of the University of Alabama*, passim.

journalism was Alabama's most noted antebellum literary figure, Alexander B. Meek. Meek became co-owner and editor of the *Flag of the Union* in 1835. The *Flag* was the successor to Walker's *Inquirer*, which failed. Unlike Brumby, Meek was a union Democrat, and he established the *Flag* in the tradition of dominance in Tuscaloosa it was to occupy until the early 1840s. Meek was only twenty-one when he became editor of the *Flag*, after graduating from the University of Alabama in 1833 and practicing law for a few years. Meek's ambitions for the *Flag* were high. In addition to promises to oppose "latitudinarian measures," such as nullification, Federal internal improvements, protective tariffs, and a national bank, Meek pledged to provide "an interesting and valuable companion to the lover of literature and general news."¹¹ Meek was not a fiery editor and reluctantly engaged in editorial disputes. Although politics remained the major focus of the paper, Meek did print literary articles from current magazines and poetry, including his own. In early 1836 Meek took temporary leave from the *Flag* to serve in the Seminole War in Florida. His letters to the *Flag* described the environs of Florida, rather than the fighting. Upon his return to Tuscaloosa, Meek began publishing the *Flag* twice a week. This effort at expansion was short-lived, less than a month. In late July, 1836, Meek sold his interest in the *Flag* to accept a gubernatorial appointment as state attorney-general. Meek remained in Tuscaloosa until 1845, practicing law, editing a literary magazine, the *Southron* (1839), and serving as probate judge (1845).¹²

¹¹*Flag of the Union*, July 11, 1835.

¹²Meek left Tuscaloosa to become assistant secretary of the U.S. Treasury. In 1846 he moved to Mobile, where he lived until 1863. There he edited the *Mobile Daily Register*, served twice in the state legislature and once as probate judge, and published his major literary works. His most noted creation was a long poem about the 1813-14 Creek War entitled *The Red Eagle* (1855). Biographical sources are plentiful. See Owen, *Alabama Biography*, IV, 1183-84; Herman C. Nixon, *Alexander Beaufort Meek: Poet, Orator, Journalist, Statesman* (Auburn: Alabama Polytechnic Institute, 1910), C. H. Ross, "Alexander Beaufort Meek," *Sewanee Review*, IV (August, 1896), 411-27; Margaret G. Figh, "Alexander Beaufort Meek: Pioneer Man of Letters," *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, II (Summer, 1940), 127-51; and A. B. Moore, "Alexander Beaufort Meek," *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935), XII, 493. Smith's *Reminiscences*, 315-44, also contains material on Meek. For his newspaper career in particular, see Simms, "A Study of the *Flag of the Union*," 29-38. For his literary career, see Benjamin B. Williams, *A Literary History of Alabama: The Nineteenth Century* (Rutherford, N.J.: Associated University Presses, Inc., 1979), 39-57. Meek's surviving personal papers are in the Alabama Department of Ar-

The new owner of the *Flag* was George H. Harrison. In less than a year, he sold the paper to its original publisher, James D. Ferguson (Ferguson had published a paper in Livingston since leaving Tuscaloosa). Ferguson, in turn, soon formed a partnership with Robert A. Eaton, and the two hired in the early summer of 1837 a new editor, Samuel A. Hale. This native of New Hampshire came to love the South, although he remained a firm unionist. He gave the *Flag* four years of vigorous leadership. In June, 1838, he purchased Ferguson's interest and became co-owner as well as editor. In 1840 James Phelan became Hale's partner by buying Ferguson's interest. A lawyer by background, Hale was direct in debate, preeminently concerned with politics, and a staunch foe of both nullification and Whiggish doctrines. Hale's fractious spirit and the lingering effect of the Panic of 1837 upon subscribers and advertisers ate into the *Flag's* dominance. The paper encountered increasing competition, first from the Whigs and then from state-rights partisans. By the early 1840s, Hale was under fire for delays in state printing. His unswerving support of the union Democrat position stood against growing state-rights fervor. In 1841, Hale successfully supported Governor Arthur P. Bagby to replace the retiring Clement C. Clay as a state senator. He thus angered members of the state legislature who were also candidates. In 1842 the *Flag* lost the state printing contract to an outside competitor, Samuel F. Rice of Talladega. Under these circumstances, Hale sold his interest in the *Flag* to Jacob Harris, foreman of the *Flag's* printing shop. Hale retired to nearby Livingston to practice law.¹³

The first competitor to exert pressure upon the *Flag* was the *Independent Monitor*. This paper was begun in June, 1837, by Marmaduke J. D. Slade, about whom little is known. The editor of the *Monitor* was Alexander M. Robinson. Robinson,

chives and History, Montgomery, and Duke University Library, Durham, North Carolina.

¹³Willis Brewer, *Alabama: Her History, Resources, War Record and Public Men from 1540 to 1872* (Montgomery, Ala.: Barret and Brown, 1872), 731, quotes Hale in later life as sayings:

... secession of the Southern states [was] the most stupendous act of folly the world has even seen. If the headstone of my grave should bear no other inscription, I would have it there recorded, that I was opposed to secession.

For Hale's newspaper career, see Simms, "A Study of the *Flag of the Union*," 41-84.

a veteran Tuscaloosa journalist, has been mentioned previously in connection with other newspapers. He came from Kentucky in 1827 and became editor, later also co-owner, of the *Sentinel*. After that paper failed, Robinson moved to the *Spirit* as editor. A contemporary described him:

To a vigorous intellect he brought a fair degree of cultivation, and by his wit and humor, together with his remarkable figure and cadaverous appearance, he soon became a noted character in Tuscaloosa. His mind was original; his conclusions quick, and his phrases emphatic; he was at once a stoic and a poet. he seemed to have little knowledge of men or of the world practically, and was eminently a book made man He was cynical, and on some subjects fanatical But still Mr. Robinson was a remarkable man.¹⁴

Robinson introduced a literary column to the *Spirit* and published poetry as well. Politically, he espoused state rights, at least until 1837. After the *Spirit* was absorbed by Brumby's *Expositor* in late 1832, Robinson moved to the *Intelligencer*, purchasing it in partnership with John G. Davenport in 1834. Robinson and Davenport in turn soon bought the *Expositor* from Brumby, when the later joined the University of Alabama faculty. In 1837 Robinson became editor of the *Independent Monitor*. Although proclaiming political independence, the *Monitor* became the town's Whig newspaper. Robinson, however, died suddenly in September, 1838, at the age of forty-four, before the *Monitor's* Whig posture became pronounced. He may have been more an anti-establishment person than either a nullifier or a Whig since he spent his life in competition with newspapers that won the state printing contract.¹⁵

After a brief interval of interim editorship following Robinson's death, William Russell Smith became editor of the *Monitor*. Like Meek of the *Flag*, Smith went on to a remarkable career in both literature and politics. In 1838 he was only

¹⁴Smith, *Reminiscences*, 45-48, also speaks favorably of Robinson's poetic abilities.

¹⁵Smith's reference above is the only known biographical information on Robinson available.

twenty-three years old. Already he had written and published the first volume of original poetry in the state, written the state's first original drama (performed in Mobile), and published Alabama's first literary journal (also in Mobile). Although Smith and Hale of the *Flag* disagree editorially, their exchanges lacked the usual vehemence. Hale, in fact, editorially expressed his admiration for Smith's qualities, even in opposing his politics. Smith's energetic manner soon led him into politics. He became mayor of Tuscaloosa in 1839 and resigned as editor of the *Monitor*. In 1841 and 1842 he served in the state legislature as a Whig but was defeated for re-election as an independent. He then moved to Fayette, where he practiced law and served as a brigadier general in the state militia before entering national politics.¹⁶

Samuel F. Rice, who won the state printing contract in a close contest from the *Flag* in 1842, experienced great difficulty as an editor but had a successful political career. A native of South Carolina, where he attended college and initially practiced law, Miller moved to Talladega in 1838. There he practiced law and for six years edited *The Watchtower*. In 1841 he was elected to the state legislature and demonstrated skill as a debater. As state printer, he had difficulty securing the size type required by law for the work and had to make a joint arrangement with Slade of the *Monitor* in order to complete the contract. His attempt to establish in Tuscaloosa a newspaper, the *Banner of Alabama*, was short-lived, in spite of offering the cheapest subscription rates in town. The *Banner* lasted only about three months, and Rice retired from

¹⁶Smith was elected to the House of Representatives for three consecutive terms in the 1850s. Pro-union, he supported the Constitutional Union ticket in the election of 1860 and was elected to Alabama's secession convention as a cooperationist. He refused to sign the ordinance of secession but raised a regiment for the Confederate army and was elected to the Confederate Congress with a pro-unification stance. After the war he was unsuccessful in securing political office, served briefly as president of the University of Alabama, and retired to Washington, D.C., as a lawyer and writer. See Owen, *Biography of Alabama*, IV, 1597-98; Anne Easby-Smith, *William Russell Smith of Alabama* (Philadelphia: Dolphin Press, 1931); Hallie Farmer, "William Russell Smith," *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935), XVII, 367; and Smith's own *Reminiscences*. For his literary career, see Williams, *A Literary History of Alabama*, 28-39. For his years as editor of the *Flag*, see Simms, "A study of the *Flag of the Union*," 62-64, and Hill, "A Study of the Leading Newspapers in Tuscaloosa, 1837-1865," 8-9. Smith's surviving personal papers, dealing primarily with the years 1861-65, are in the Easby-Smith Papers, Library of Congress.

the Tuscaloosa newspaper scene.¹⁷

After Hail left the *Flag*, that newspaper soon was taken over by the state-rights faction of the Democratic party. As the national elections of 1844 approached, the *Flag* had come out for Martin Van Buren for Democratic nominee for president. To provide the Calhoun faction with a newspaper voice in the state capital, John McCormick, owner of the Greensboro *Beacon* announced plans to publish the *Alabama State Journal* in Tuscaloosa. Background details are lost in unrecorded history, but in December, 1843, McCormick purchased the *Flag* from Phelan and Harris. McCormick's new paper was published as the *State Journal and Flag*.¹⁸

The union Democrat partisans made an effort to recover. Robert A. Eaton, who had been a co-owner of the *Flag* from 1837 until 1840, when he sold out to Phelan, launched the *Democratic Gazette* to champion Van Buren. Eaton and his backers, however, failed in the legislature to wrest the state printing contract from McCormick, and the *Democratic Gazette* ceased publication in December, 1844.¹⁹

McCormick still faced a strong competitor in the *Independent Monitor*. Stephen B. Miller had become editor of this paper in 1840, and he had engaged in heated editorial exchanges with McCormick's predecessors, Eaton, Hale, and Phelan. By September, 1844, Miller and McCormick had quarrelled to such an extent that a public altercation ensued. After engaging in face-to-face argument in front of a local hotel, the two wrestled over a pistol (apparently drawn by McCormick). No injuries occurred, and the two thereafter confined their battles

¹⁷No known copies of the *Banner* survive. Its history can only be traced through references to it in the *Flag*. See Simms, "A Study of the *Flag of the Union*," 83-84. Rice later practiced law in Montgomery and served as Chief Justice of the Alabama Supreme Court from 1856 to 1859. His political career after leaving Tuscaloosa was remarkable for its variety. He was in turn a Democrat for Zachary Taylor, a southern rights Democrat, a Know-Nothing, a secessionist, and a Republican. See Owen, *Biography of Alabama*, IV, 1435; Brewer, *Alabama*, 470-71; and William Garrett, *Reminiscences Of Public Men in Alabama for Thirty Years* (Atlanta, Ga.: Plantation Publishing Company, 1872), 194-95.

¹⁸*Flag of the Union*, November 29, 1843.

¹⁹*Democratic Gazette*, December 21, 1843. The last known issue of this paper (December 19, 1844) makes no mention of curtailment. The first year's subscriptions expired at that time, and failure to secure the state printing contract in the 1844-45 legislature no doubt sealed the *Gazette's* fate.

to editorial columns.²⁰ Miller also struggled with his own publisher, M. D. J. Slade, over whether or not to endorse a Whig candidate for governor.²¹

Miller's last run at McCormick before the capital was moved from Tuscaloosa to Montgomery concerned the contract for state printing. As noted before, McCormick inherited the favored position enjoyed by the *Flag* in this matter. Miller joined with other newspapers around the state in agitating that the state printing contract be put on a bid basis. These efforts were successful, and the contract for the 1846 session was let out for bid, after vigorous debate in the legislature. McCormick, however, halved his previous prices and won the contract.²²

Miller and McCormick did not always disagree. The one issue that united them above all else was resistance to removal of the capital from Tuscaloosa. Both editorially resisted removal but unsuccessfully.²³ McCormick prepared for the change wisely. He formed a partnership in late 1846 with John T. Walshe, owner of the *Montgomery Advertiser*. After removal of the capital to Montgomery had been decided, McCormick announced that the two papers would be joined as the *Flag of the Union and Montgomery Advertiser*. He sold his Tuscaloosa assets to James M. Warren, a former newspaper associate of William Lowndes Yancey.²⁴ After the last issue of the *State Journal and Flag* was published on Christmas Day, 1846, its offices, equipment, subscription list, and Democratic tradition were taken up by Warren's *Observer*. Miller and the *Independent Monitor* remained Tuscaloosa's champion of the Whig party.

Thus, Tuscaloosa's newspapers of the capital period not only reflected the impact of political currents of the day but provided in the person of John McCormick part of the frame-

²⁰*Independent Monitor*, August 28 and September 4, and 18, 1844. McCormick also published a campaign sheet, the *Democratic Mentor*, in Tuscaloosa from March to November, 1844.

²¹*Independent Monitor*, July 16, 23, and 30, 1845.

²²*Independent Monitor*, September 3 and December 31, 1845, and February 25, 1846; and *State Journal and Flag*, January 16 and March 27, 1846.

²³See Malcolm C. McMillan, "The Selection of Montgomery as Alabama's Capital," *Alabama Review*, I (April, 1948), 79-90.

²⁴Screws, "Alabama Journalism," *Memorial Record*, II, 171.

work for the establishment of the capital press corps in Montgomery. The shearing issues of secession were in the future, but the history of Tuscaloosa's capital newspapers illustrates the difficulty in the period of maintaining consistent political positions, the evolution of state-rights strength, and a significant core of unionism that was to persist to the very day of secession.

RACIAL INFERIORITY, CONVICT LABOR, AND
MODERN MEDICINE:
A NOTE ON THE COALBURG AFFAIR

by

Robert David Ward and William Warren Rogers

The twists and turns of policy that have marked the history of the Alabama penal system have generated argument and intellectual ferment through the decades. The state penitentiary was established in 1839, but operating costs led to the adoption of the private lease system in 1846. With differing leasees, the practice continued until 1862. The state operated the prison during the Civil War, but the Penal Code of 1866 permitted the convicts to be leased to the highest bidder. The return to private leasing contained a new provision: the prisoners could now be worked outside the prison grounds. Despite periodic reforms regarding the care and treatment of both county and state convicts, convict leasing continued until the twentieth century and was not ended until 1927.¹

¹Governor Rufus W. Cobb, "History of the Penitentiary," in *First Biennial Report of the Inspectors of Convicts to the Governor, from October 1, 1884 to October 1, 1886* (Montgomery, 1886), p. 348. The best study of the Alabama penitentiary system is Jack Leonard Lerner, "A Moment to Shame: The Convict Lease System in Alabama" (Unpublished M. A. thesis, Samford University, 1969). See also Elizabeth Bonner Clark, "Abolition of the Convict Lease System in Alabama, 1913-1928" (Unpublished M. A. thesis, University of Alabama, 1949); R. H. Dawson, "The Convict System of Alabama, As It Was And As It Is," in Safford Berney, *Hand-Book of Alabama: a Complete Index to the State, with Map*, 2d and rev. ed. (Birmingham, 1892), pp. 254-266; Malcolm Moos, *State Penal Administration in Alabama* (Tuscaloosa, 1942); Allen J. Goings, *Bourbon Democracy in Alabama, 1874-1890* (Tuscaloosa, 1951).

By the 1890s most of the prisoners, state and county, were worked in coal mines. The mines lay in Alabama's mineral belt centering around Birmingham and Jefferson County. A limited but articulate group of reformers protested the system's evils, but its defenders were powerfully entrenched wielders of economic and political power. While much of the debate centered on the issues of penal organization and convict treatment, some led into different areas and illuminated other subjects. Such was the case in the 1895 medical investigation of the Coalburg prison that brought on pamphlet warfare among the participants, and thus froze their arguments for a later time.

Early in 1895 the Jefferson County Board of Health became increasingly concerned over information that the Sloss-Sheffield Company's prison at its Coalburg mine was experiencing abnormally high mortality rates. The labor force was composed predominantly of black county convicts. The board's concern led to the appointment of Dr. Thomas D. Parke, the public health officer of Jefferson County, to make an investigation and render a report.² The physician began his investigation on 14 March 1895, but it was not until early August that his report was published as *Report on Coalburg Prison by Thomas D. Parke, M.D., Health Officer of Jefferson County*.³

Reporting to the board, Parke opened with a brief statement of his mission, and explained that on his first visit to Coalburg he had realized the complexity of the mortality subject. Inspecting the premises was not enough to lead to "in-

²There were 2 reports on Coalburg. The first was made by Dr. Jerome Cochran, state health officer for Alabama, and Dr. Judson Davie, physician inspector of the convict department. The second was made by Dr. Parke. The 3 doctors had been appointed to work together, but Cochran and Davie had interpreted their mission in narrow fashion, while Parke went beyond the bounds of usual investigations. Unwilling to accept the conservative and routine summary of Cochran and Davie, Parke issued separately his own minority report. Cochran and Davie concluded that "there is something in the life of the miners and in the work of the mines that is inimical to the physical welfare — to the health and longevity of our negro convicts." The physicians agreed that separate T. B. facilities were needed and that more sunlight was necessary. They did not mention the curative powers of soap and water, and stressed the need for disinfectants. Their report, a monument to the futility of statistics, was "Report of the State Health Officer to the Governor on Coalburg," *First Biennial Report of the Board of Inspectors of Convicts to the Governor: From September 1, 1894 to August 31, 1896* (Montgomery, 1896), pp. I-XXVIII.

³It was published in Birmingham by Roberts and Son.

telligent conclusions." Far more medical data was necessary, and Parke submitted his own list of questions to the company. While the officials seemed cooperative, many of his questions remained unanswered. In a judgement not likely to please the prison doctor, Parke concluded that there was a lack "of adequate and full hospital records."¹

Records or not, Parke was confronted with a mortality rate of 90 per 1,000 at Coalburg. That was higher than the rate at the Pratt mines where convicts were also worked, and appallingly higher than Jefferson County's general rate of from 8 to 11 per thousand or its black mortality rate of from 18 to 25 per 1,000.² Why were too many convicts dying at Coalburg? It was not the food or the drinking water, said Parke, nor could he find any evidence that the nearby coke ovens were injurious to health. Existing records showed that tuberculosis was the greatest cause of death, and Parke repeated the long accepted verity that blacks were "naturally susceptible" to the disease.³ Other explanations had stopped at this point, but Parke went further. The records also showed a large number of cases of diarrhea and dysentery, and there were disturbing signs of septic conditions.

The company's own figures indicated that in the last two years 15,467 man-days of labor had been lost due to sickness and confinement in the prison hospital. Parke then discovered that a "fair percentage of sickness has been what is called 'sore-leg.'" The malady began with an abrasion or cut followed in a few days by inflammation and soreness. In the luckier patients the problem ended there. In the less fortunate there was a progression of high fever and "burrowing of pus along between the planes of the muscles." The difficulties

¹Parke, *Report on Coalburg*, pp. 1-2.

²Convict mortality rates in Alabama were a subject all to themselves. Parke's cited rate of 90 per 1,000 at Coalburg differed from other reports, but seemed to be accepted by the Sloss Company. See Cochran, "Report of the State Health Officer," and *Report of Special Committee* [of the Legislature] *to Investigate the Convict System*, 1897 (n. p., n.d.), p. 12.

³The use of chewing tobacco was widespread — it was a part of the convicts' weekly issue — and the resulting spitting must have spread the tuberculosis bacilli at alarming rates. On the other side of the coin it had been believed that blacks were immune to yellow fever, a point disproved by Benjamin Rush in 1793. See Francis R. Packard, *History of Medicine in the United States* (New York, 1963), I, pp. 126-27.

might go on for months, sometimes killing the patients or "debilitating them to that degree that their systems offer a most favorable soil for the bacilli which tubercular patients in adjoining beds furnish them in abundance."⁷ Parke at first suspected that 'sore-leg' was a scorbutic condition, but he now pronounced — with a certainty he did not explain — that it was erysipelas, an infection caused by the invasion of streptococci bacteria.

Here, to Dr. Parke, was a sally port against disease. Tuberculosis lay beyond the physician's intervention, but erysipelas could be attacked and eradicated. In an age of antibiotics it is hard to measure how early Thomas Parke was applying the fruits of research. The bacteria causing erysipelas had not been identified until 1883 by Friedrich Fehleisen, and the standard antiseptic procedures were still those of Joseph Lister — most notably the use of a spray of carbolic acid.

What was needed at Coalburg, Dr. Parke told the Sloss officials, was the rigid application of aseptic procedures. Every cut should be thoroughly washed out and bandaged so that further filth and water could not reach it. Cleanliness was the key. Parke was promised cooperation, but he found that dressings were inadequately applied and the Coalburg staff uncooperative.⁸

If Parke had concluded his report at that point he might have done no more than bruise the feelings of Dr. F. P. Lewis, the prison physician. But it was not enough to stop erysipelas, or isolate tubercular patients, or recommend that convict work hours be changed so that they received more sunshine. Parke went on to quote the prison mortality rates for other states, and a rate of 40 per 1,000 for Mississippi and only 15 per 1,000 for Virginia suggested a fundamental fault in the Alabama system.⁹ Of course the Sloss officials seemed cooperative — "they recognized, like the slaveholders of old, that from

⁷Parke, *Report on Coalburg*, p. 6.

⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

⁹The convict inspector's own figures since 1873 had made it plain that convicts worked in agriculture had much lower mortality and sickness rates than those worked in the coal mines. The greater the divergence of rates, the louder the lamentations over the awful necessity of keeping convicts in the mines.

a commercial point of view, if from no higher, the health of the man is requisite to a full return on the investment. But the evils of the system, like that of slavery, are inherent."¹⁰ Park then concluded his report with an accurate excoriation of the county convict system. As many would have put it, Dr. Parke "had quit doctoring and gone to preaching."

There was no question that the Sloss-Sheffield Company was stung by the Parke report. It was not the findings of erysipelas that were dangerous for public consumption, and the company had ridden out worse storms of a statistical nature. The threat and the danger lay in Parke's argument that the convict lease system was inherently wrong, and that it was producing its inevitable fruits in the high mortality rates.

Only a few weeks after the publication of Parke's report, a pamphlet appeared in Birmingham entitled *Facts About Coalburg Prison. Dr. Parke's Report Reviewed*.¹¹ Prepared by J. W. Castleman, the assistant to the Sloss president, it included a letter from Dr. F. P. Lewis, the Coalburg physician. Castleman open his rebuttal on minor points concerning the "supposed high death rate." It was news to him and certainly only recently that anyone had known that tuberculosis was contagious. Henceforth the company would rectify the situation by separating its patients.¹² Both Dr. Parke and Dr. Lewis were eminent physicians, although Parke "was without special experience in the matter." The issue of the 'sore-leg' was merely a doctors' quarrel over the proper mode of treatment. Was it true that conditions in coal mines were inherently bad? Yes, it was. It was clear that miners could not do their work in the sunshine, and "the Sloss Company cannot undertake to put skylights in the roof of its mines."¹³

According to Castleman, Parke's report was based on a fundamental error. Dr. Parke was guilty of poor research; he simply did not understand the white-black mortality ratio. It was well established by prison records in Alabama that

¹⁰Parke, *Report on Coalburg*, p. 11.

¹¹Published in Birmingham by Patch Stationery.

¹²The contagiousness of tuberculosis had been proved by Jean Antoine Villemin in 1865, although the tubercule bacillus was not isolated by Robert Koch until 1882.

¹³*Facts About Coalburg*, pp. 5-6. It was doubtless true that Castleman's facetious humor made no impression on Parke.

3.69 blacks died for every 1 white. The ratio stemmed from the fact that under unfavorable conditions "the physical inferiority of the negro race becomes manifest."¹⁴ The number of deaths among free citizens in Birmingham showed the same ratio, and the Northern mortality figures when multiplied by 3.69 were in line with Southern rates.¹⁵ Mississippi, with a predominance of black prisoners and a death rate of 40 per 1,000, was explained by Castleman with the admission that they were employed in the inherently healthy occupation of farming. This would seem to have established Parke's point, but Castleman was not deflected from his conclusive logic. If a black's "comparative death increases at an accelerated ratio under confinement, and we are yet compelled for the good of society to so confine him, what reproach is it that we can not alter a law of nature and keep his death rate down to the white basis."¹⁶

It only remained for Dr. Lewis to close out the rebuttal. He was so obviously offended by Dr. Parke's observations and so upset to be challenged on his own ground that his attitude detracted from his argument. Parke, in his "sensational report" had been guided by "intuition, not by facts."¹⁷ Parke had made only 6 visits to Coalburg, and he had erroneously reported that the prison was made of logs rather than of planks. As for Parke's diagnosis of "endemic, infectious erysipelas," Lewis argued that no patient operated on in his hospital had ever had it and that no one with a laceration had contracted it. Moreover — and this was the scariest of his medical conclusions — "I have frequently gone direct from the

¹⁴Castleman quoted Dr. R. M. Cunningham, the prison doctor at the Pratt mines for this precise ratio.

¹⁵Were the blacks in Birmingham also under Castleman's "unfavorable conditions?" The figures for 1894 show that the death rate for blacks in Birmingham was 19.7 per 1,000 compared to 9.8 per 1,000 for whites. The 3.69 correction figure for white rates comes out much too high, but it should be remembered that the black and white rates included women and children. It was easy to be diverted to the question of rate differences and to lose sight of the rate itself.

¹⁶*Facts About Coalburg*, p. 10. Castleman also argued that Pratt mines' lower mortality was the result of having only first class convicts — graded by physical condition to perform the most demanding tasks — while Coalburg was required to take all classes of county convicts. It was true that the state system attempted to remove convicts from the mines if they could not perform any work, but, contrary to Castleman, Pratt worked all 4 classes of state convicts.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 13.

hospital to attend obstetrical cases, and I have never had a case of puerperal fever."¹⁸

Plainly, the 'sore-leg' was not erysipelas, and the clinching proof was that Lewis had seen cases of 'sore-leg' among people who had never been near the prison or the mine. Lewis simply refused to recognize erysipelas by any name other than 'sore-leg' no matter where he saw it. With that logic the company rested its case.

It would be interesting to have heard the discussions generated by the Sloss rebuttal. But it is certain that Dr. Parke was not content to let the matter rest in the company's corner. Somewhat delayed, Dr. Parke published his second pamphlet in December 1895: *Coalburg Prison. The Health Officer of Jefferson County to the Board of Convict Inspectors*.¹⁹

First, Dr. Parke took up the 'sore-leg' issue. Addressing doctors in his first report, said Parke, he had assumed certain matters without explaining them. In the beginning he had decided to "make a further test of the germs found in the tissues." He took fluid samples from the infections of 2 patients and "cultivations were made according to recognized methods and the micro-organism characteristic of erysipelas was grown in abundance and demonstrated under the microscope."²⁰ Dr. Lewis' treatment had consisted of spraying the infection with a "little bi-chloride of mercury . . . without previous thorough cleansing with soap and water and dressing with iodoform." There was, after all, "no guess work about this." The treatment utilized by Lewis had been demonstrated "beyond discussion."²¹ The worst part of the situation was that "for dreary years erysipelas has been allowed to attack men in this prison, and I hold that enough suffering and pain has already been unnecessarily endured to warrant the most energetic measures."²²

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 16. Puerperal, or "child-bed," fever was the scourge of maternity cases, and doctors as prime carriers had been demonstrated by Ignaz P. Semmelweis in the 1840s.

¹⁹Published in Birmingham by Roberts, 1895.

²⁰Parke, *Coalburg Prison*, p. 2.

²¹*Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

²²*Ibid.*, p. 4. Parke observed that modern bacteriology might solve many prison problems, and he suggested the employment of a trained man to check on various sources of infection.

As to the white-black mortality ratio and the major argument against him, Dr. Parke made his point in short order. The 1891 prison statistics for Georgia showed a death rate from all causes of 28 per 1,000. The year ending 1895 showed less than 23 per 1,000. "No one can claim," wrote Parke, "that this death rate is low, and yet compared with the 90 per 1,000 of Coalburg it seems very low indeed. They have the same preponderance of colored prisoners, and they get them from [county] jails."²³ In Georgia more prisoners were leased to railroad, lumber, and farming interests than to coal mines. As shameful as convict leasing was in Georgia (the state abandoned it in 1908), it was less brutal than the system in Alabama. The difference was that Alabama worked convicts in coal mines — and that was the point Parke had made the first time.²⁴

There was no further reply from the Sloss Company, and the debate ended with Parke having at least the last printed word. Far more than that, Parke had applied the techniques of the new field of bacteriology to penal health — and thus to the general welfare. In his advocacy of going beyond anti-sepsis to asepsis he acted out on the local level, and remarkably early, the larger struggle in the medical profession between the new advance and the established idea.

The controversy failed to produce any results that were immediately beneficial. Unfortunately for the convicts, conditions would get worse before they got better. In the next decades various laws required better health care for prisoners. But the lease system lingered until 1927, and until it was abolished, no permanent improvements could be made. Yet Parke had rendered a significant service: he told others that working convicts in mines yielded disastrous results, not because blacks were inherently inferior but because the system was inherently wrong. This was public health at its broadest and its best.

²³*Ibid.*, p. 6.

²⁴A. Elizabeth Taylor, "The Origin and Development of the Convict Lease System in Georgia," *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, XXVI (June, 1942), pp. 122, 127-128.



Grace, Marchioness Curzon of Kedleston, portrait by
John Singer Sargent

Kedleston Hall, Derbyshire



LADY CURZON, THE MARCHIONESS FROM DECATUR

by

F. Russell Bryant

Traditionally Great Britain has been a haven for diverse ethnic groups, which, for whatever reasons, have found it desirable to leave their homelands. In the footsteps of the Huguenots, Jews, Orientals, and European nationalists, the Americans in the 19th and 20th centuries began to appear. Some were Southerners, escaping the consequences of the Civil War; others, such as Henry James, the vulgarity of the Gilded Age. Still others were the daughters of New England millionaires, who sought to add prestige to their families by marrying into the British aristocracy. The 1920s found two Alabamians in London, each making a mark on British social history. The first and most famous was Tallulah Bankhead. Beautiful, witty, and highly talented, she became the first American actress to succeed on the London stage. She portrayed herself as an Alabama belle and helped to establish the popularity of the Southern accent with the English upper classes. The other was Grace, Marchioness Curzon of Kedleston. As wife of the British foreign secretary in the post World War I era, she was one of the most important society figures in Britain. She is generally given credit for popularizing cocktails with British society. In their obituary of her the *Times* of London described Lady Curzon as "a woman of elegance and great beauty" who conquered English high society.¹ Unlike Tallulah, who never forgot her origins, Grace Curzon became thoroughly British. That she was from Alabama, few would have guessed.

¹The London *Times*, July 1, 1958. Hereafter cited as *Times*.

Tallulah made her way in the world on the strength of her dramatic talents and wits; Grace, largely by luck, inherited wealth, and the generous application of charm and hospitality. As a socially ambitious American, she was enormously successful. She surpassed Lady Astor and Wallis Simpson in winning acceptance by all ranks of London society; in her day she was only exceeded by the Duchesses of Marlborough and of Roxburghe in reaching the upper ranks of the peerage. Whereas none questioned Grace's beauty, some found her captivating, others thought her vain and self-centered. Still she lived a life rivaled by few. She saw more glamour, pomp, and privilege than anyone born in Alabama.²

Not surprisingly, Lady Curzon's story is not well known in Alabama and her name, when mentioned, usually produces quizzical expressions. Most of what has been published in Alabama journals, either during her life or afterwards, contains inaccuracies; beginning with a 1923 suggestion in the *Montgomery Advertiser* that she met her famous English husband in Brazil,³ to an article in the *Huntsville Times* in 1977 that had her mother buried in the Maple Hill cemetery in 1883.⁴ The authors of *The Story of Decatur, Alabama* were not even certain that she was born in the Burleson-Hinds-McEntire House.⁵ One account, the suggestion that Lady Curzon's first husband was a Tennessee meatpacker, led her daughter, Marcella Rice, in 1977 to complain to a distant relative in Huntsville about the numerous mistakes that continued to be made.⁶ The object of this paper is to make available to students of Alabama history a brief account of Lady Curzon's extraordinary life.

Grace Curzon's family, the Hindses, emigrated to America

²Although Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt nee Frank Crawford of Mobile — the Commodore's second wife — had access to a greater fortune (and was largely responsible for the funding of what came to be Vanderbilt University), Grace Curzon remained the only Alabama-born female to acquire a title and social standing in the Old as well as the New World.

³*Montgomery Advertiser*, May 22, 1923.

⁴*Huntsville Times*, June 19, 1977.

⁵William H. Jenkins and John Knox, *The Story of Decatur, Alabama*. (Decatur, 1970), 131. They thought she might have been born in a Hinds house that formerly stood behind the Burleson-Hinds-McEntire House.

⁶The complaint was in the form of a letter dated December 12, 1977, in private hands.

from England in the early seventeenth century. The first three generations settled in the colony of New Jersey; the fourth in North Carolina, where some of them served in the Revolutionary armies; various members of the fifth generation relocated in Alabama, Tennessee, and Kentucky. One branch of the Hinds family that settled in Kentucky later moved on to Illinois. Here Grace's father, Joseph Monroe Hinds, was born in 1842, as had been her more famous uncle, Jerome Jasper, four years earlier.⁷ At the outbreak of the Civil War, the five Hinds brothers enlisted in the Union forces. In 1862 Monroe and Jerome joined the newly formed First Alabama Cavalry whose commanding officer, the dashing but incorrigible George E. Spencer of Nebraska would play an important role in their later lives. During the war Spencer managed to ingratiate himself with Ulysses S. Grant, while Jerome rose to the rank of captain and Monroe to second lieutenant.⁸ In 1865 they were mustered out at Huntsville, eventually settling in Decatur. Through Hinds Brothers & Co., Jerome, Monroe, and a third brother, John Baxter, pursued commercial interests, soon acquiring control of the local shipping and stage coach lines, and investing in real estate;⁹ Spencer set up a law practice pursuant to a political career.

The long road that brought Grace into the ranks of the British establishment had its beginnings in the unscrupulous and ruthless politics of the Reconstruction era in Alabama. With state politics now controlled by Republican carpetbaggers and scalawags, the ambitious Jerome and Spencer evidently bought enough votes to get themselves elected to public office in 1868: Jerome to the Alabama Senate and Spencer, aided in part by Grant's election to the presidency that year, to the United States Senate. Once in ear-shot of Grant, Spencer was able to control federal patronage in Alabama for at least a

⁷Information on the Hinds family can be found in a folder under that heading in the Heritage Room of the Huntsville Public Library; particular reference should be made to the genealogical essay "Hinds of Knox County, Tennessee, and Wayne County, Kentucky."

⁸William S. Hoole, *Alabama Tories, the First Alabama Cavalry, U.S.A., 1862-1865*. (Tuscaloosa, 1961), 85, 138, 140; Spencer and the Hinds brothers marched with Sherman to the sea.

⁹Thomas M. Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography*, 4 vols. (Chicago, 1921), III, 815. Also see the Decatur newspaper *Alabama Republican*, December 9, 1868, which contains a Hinds Brother & Co. advertisement, with Monroe listed as General Superintendent.

decade.¹⁰ For the Hinds brothers Spencer's influence became a bonanza. Jerome became Spencer's agent in the sales of public offices; he reportedly bought Spencer's re-election in 1872.¹¹ By appointing relatives to key places in the postal system, the Hinds brothers acquired a hefty share of Star Route contracts for the delivery of rural mail.¹² More important for Grace, Jerome was able to procure from Spencer an attractive appointment for Monroe to the United States Mission in Brazil.¹³ Although he was now prosperous, Monroe's new post carried with it a handsome salary of \$6,000 a year.¹⁴ He was only thirty years old.

In later years Grace, in various public releases about her origins, described her father as minister to Brazil. As the *United States Statistical Record* clearly shows Monroe was not that; he was the consul-general at Rio, the second ranking position.¹⁵ Perhaps her error was indicative of sensitivity about her origins; it can not have been a mistake. While in Brazil, Monroe married the beautiful Lucy Trillia, the daughter of a wealthy Anglo-Italian family from Buenos Aires with business holdings in Rio. Monroe remained in Rio until 1878,

¹⁰Sarah W. Wiggins, *The Scalawag in Alabama Politics, 1865-1881*. (University Alabama, 1977), 57, 71; Walter L. Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*. (New York, 1905), 737.

¹¹See the sundry charges in *Report of the Joint Committee of the General Assembly of Alabama in Regard to the Alleged Election of George E. Spencer as United States Senator*. (Montgomery, 1875), hereafter cited as *Report of the Joint Committee*: also see *Charges and Specifications Preferred by the State of Alabama Against George E. Spencer, and submitted to the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections, 1874*. Some of the tactics used by Spencer and Hinds are described in a set of protests filed under the date May 25, 1871, Ulysses S. Grant Papers, Presidential Papers Micro-film, reel 3; Fleming also describes some of Spencer's antics (756-60) while Hoole asserts that Jerome Hinds was one of the most disliked carpetbaggers in the state (140).

¹²Sarah V. Woolfolk, "Carpetbaggers in Alabama; Tradition vs Truth," *Alabama Review*, XV (April 1962), 138. *The United States Statistical Record, 1877*. (Washington, D.C., 1878), 451, 457 shows that the Hindses also had mail contracts in the Arizona and Idaho territories. Hereafter cited as *U.S.S.R.*

¹³*The Report of the Joint Committee* contains numerous testimonials that Spencer controlled all Federal appointments involving Alabama as well as the testimony of J. R. Horner that Spencer offered him a diplomatic appointment (lxxxvii).

¹⁴*U.S.S.R.*, 1878, 12.

¹⁵In *Reminiscences* (London, 1955), 9, Grace wrote that "While still a young man, my Father was appointed U.S. Consul at Rio de Janeiro. . . . He was promoted to Consul General, and finally to U.S. Minister to Brazil." Hereafter cited as *Reminiscences*. The *U.S.S.R.* shows he was and remained consul general the whole time; the minister for the period when Monroe should have been by Grace's account was an Alabamian, Henry W. Hilliard, 1877-1881.

coincidentally the year Spencer lost his bid for reelection. Already parents of two children, the Hinds were resettled in Decatur in time for Grace to be born there that same year.¹⁶

The Hinds returned to one of the finest homes in northern Alabama, the Burleson House. It had been one of the two houses left standing at the war's end within the city limits. Built in 1824 along the banks of the Tennessee River, the mansion of red bricks was three stories tall with four columns on the front and a widow's walk — which had in turn served the Confederacy and Union well during the war.¹⁷ With dowry money from his new wife Jerome had bought the house from the Burlesons in October 1869 for \$5,000. In January 1870 he sold part interest in it to Monroe.¹⁸ Evidently the three brothers and their families, and even Spencer lived there together for a while.¹⁹ According to tradition Grace was born in the second floor bedroom on the northeast corner overlooking the Tennessee River.²⁰ The earliest description of her is found in a letter Lucy penned to Monroe in the summer of

¹⁶Although Grace gave no clues as to her age in either her autobiography or her entries in *Who's Who*, the United States Census Report for Morgan County in 1880 shows her age in that year as "1½" (1880 Census Population Schedule, Alabama, Morgan County, National Archives Micro-copy # T-9, Roll # 27).

¹⁷A brief history of the house, entitled "The McEntire Home" was written in 1937 by Mrs. Ben Britnell and was passed on to Ann Tankerley nee McEntire, the present owner of the house. During the Civil War both sides used the house as headquarters. Supposedly Albert Sidney Johnston, C.S.A., planned in the dining room his tactics for the Battle of Shiloh in 1862, while the following year Grant and Sherman met there after the fall of Vicksburg.

¹⁸The deeds are filed as (D) M/250 and (D) K/357 at the Office of the Probate Judge of Morgan County, Decatur, Alabama (hereafter cited as O.P.J.D.). This was only the beginning of a curious pattern of ownership transference among the brothers and Jerome's wife, Cornelia, that probably reflected a desire to avoid loosing the house, owing to law suits against Jerome. On June 14, 1870 Monroe sold his share of the house back to Jerome for twice what he had paid [(D) L/33]. In 1871 Jerome divested himself of all claims to the house in favor of Cornelia [(D) M/359-361]; Cornelia then sold the house to John B. Hinds in August, 1872 for \$8,000 [(D) M/373-376]. Two months later John sold it back to Cornelia for the same sum [(D) M/495-497]. She evidently neglected to pay the taxes, for Lucy Hinds acquired ownership by court action in 1879 for \$54.85 [(D) X/59].

¹⁹*Report of the Joint Committee*, lxxxvii. Complementing the testimony before the Joint Committee that Spencer lived with the Hinds is a photograph of the Hinds family with Spencer and his daughter in front of the house in the early 1880s. The photograph belonged to Lady Curzon and is now owned by her daughter.

²⁰Huntsville *Times*, March 1, 1936.

1878. In it she wrote "Baby is hight [*sic*] as ever."²¹ That Grace would live a charmed life was first evidenced when she escaped the ravages of the yellow fever epidemic that struck Decatur in November 1878.

When Grace was four, the family moved to Huntsville. Although the Republicans had lost control of the state's political offices as the Reconstruction era drew to an end, they still controlled federal appointments. Either through Spencer, who still had some influence on the Alabama appointments, or through Jerome, now a deputy collector in Alabama for the Internal Revenue Service, or through some other power broker, Monroe was appointed marshal of the Northern District of Alabama, Fifth Circuit.²² For the next four years the Hindses lived modestly in Huntsville in a frame house on Grove Street until it partially burned, then moved to a smaller dwelling at the corner of Madison and Gates.²³ For Monroe and his family the four years at Huntsville were not pleasant ones. Besides the loss of their first home, the Hindses had to cope with the stigma of being carpetbaggers, Republicans, and employees of a court system held in contempt by the local population. Moreover, their two eldest children died. Monroe did gain some favorable publicity when he brought to trial Frank James, the brother of Jesse.²⁴ He supplemented his meager salary as marshal — \$200 a year — with Star Route mail contracts obtained through the Republican patronage system. In 1881-1883 he had thirty contracts totaling \$11,776 and for the next two years thirty-one totaling \$12,344.²⁵

²¹Lucy Hinds' letter was undated but she enclosed with it a second letter she had just received from her sister-in-law, dated June 3, 1878, that she was forwarding to Monroe at once. This packet of letters was found by Leroy McEntire behind a mantel in the Hinds-McEntire home some fifty years ago.

²²One of Spencer's election agents, A. R. Baker, had held the same office earlier and Spencer had also secured the position of marshal of the Southern and Middle Districts for Jerome Hinds briefly in 1872 (see *Report of the Joint Committee*, lxvi and clvii).

²³Although the Grove Street house was repaired — the roof had burned — it subsequently fell into disrepair. Saved from demolition in the 1970s by Leon Hinds, it was recently sold, and moved to Steel Street, where it is being restored by David Parrish, the artist. The house at Madison and Gates, where the Hindses lived, 1883-1886, was eventually demolished.

²⁴Huntsville *Times*, March 1, 1936. James was acquitted in the April 1884 trial, but rearrested on leaving the courthouse for crimes committed elsewhere.

²⁵*U.S.S.R.*, 1883, II, 22-24 and 1885, II, 26-27.

In her autobiography, Grace mentioned Huntsville largely in reference to the deaths of her elder brother and sister, which left her with a fear of death and an early interest in religion.²⁶ She also started to school. While living in Huntsville she gained a new brother and sister; the latter, Anita, would, like Grace, opt to live her adult life in England. In a Huntsville *News* article, written in the 1930s, the author asserted that "Grace played in the area around Big Spring. Old timers remember her as a bright child who appeared on the streets with long curls that her mother tediously wrapped."²⁷

The family returned to Decatur in 1886 following the termination of her father's appointment as United States marshal. By now the Democrats had captured the White House with the election of Grover Cleveland in 1884, and Republican control over federal patronage ended for the foreseeable future. The family fortunes now began a descent that would parallel Grace's fate in the 1930s. By 1887 Monroe had lost all his mail contracts and Jerome not only his legislative seat but his I.R.S. job. In that year the brothers decided to subdivide the four lots that surrounded the Burleson Home.²⁸ Jerome regained ownership of the Burleson House which he converted into the Park Hotel.²⁹ That venture was not a success, and his growing indebtedness obliged him to sell the house in 1894 to H. S. Freedman for \$10 and "other considerations."³⁰ Monroe retained the rear part of the property on which he built a two-story frame house with twelve rooms. Grace was always associated with this house by those who subsequently could remember playing with her as a girl. The construction of the house at a time of declining revenues landed Monroe in even worse financial trouble, and he appears to have been somewhat dependent on his brother-in-law, John Trillia, for

²⁶*Reminiscences*, 10.

²⁷Huntsville *Times*, March 1, 1936.

²⁸O.P.J.D. (D) 31/455.

²⁹*Ibid.*, (MC) 2/25. This move probably reflected the general belief that Decatur was in the midst of an economic boom (see the booklet on the city put out by the Decatur Land Improvement & Furnace Co., in 1887 at the Wheeler Basin Regional Library). The reappearance of yellow fever in 1888 ended the boom as well as the lives of thirty-five citizens (see John Knox's *A History of Morgan County*. [Decatur, 1967], 218).

³⁰*Ibid.*, (D) 43/327.

funds.³¹ In 1894 Monroe sold his house to Trillia for \$7,000;³² the brother-in-law gave it back two years later for \$1.³³ Although the family shortly thereafter left Decatur, Grace's mother continued to pay the taxes on the house until 1928. The following year she lost ownership of it at public auction for \$24.77³⁴ at a time when Grace's own financial woes were first beginning. Then in a state of disrepair, the frame house shortly thereafter was pulled down.

Writing in her mid-seventies Grace devoted two pages of her autobiography to her early years in "the sleepy town" of Decatur. She described a way of life that the war had destroyed for many Southerners: living in a lovely antebellum mansion with faithful servants — "Uncle Odie" and "Aunt Mary" — a garden "enchanted and typical of the South," carriages and horses at her disposal. To this picture of Southern gentility, she added:

On the other side of the Tennessee River we had a large plantation, and cotton fields. It was wonderful to watch the Negroes picking cotton in the hottest month — August — the women and girls with their heads tied in bright bandannas, the men and youths in gay shirts, singing as only Negroes can sing.³⁵

Like a Southern belle she could watch from her veranda the cotton pickers in the distant fields, fields that are now flooded by T.V.A.

It is tempting to suggest that this image of the Old South was partly inspired by the book or the film version of *Gone With The Wind* that took London by storm in the early years

³¹The O.P.J.D. records show that there was a judgement against Monroe in December, 1891 for \$7,500 for non-payment of bills (JDA/24); another in April, 1895 for \$325 (JDA/65).

³²*Ibid.*, (D) 43/196.

³³*Ibid.*, (D) 44/420. There is a curious document in (D) 43/549 which suggests that the sheriff sold the house at public auction on October 7, 1895 for \$440 owing to Monroe's non-payment of the judgement mentioned in the latter part of footnote # 31. As the house did not belong to Monroe, the sale would have been illegal.

³⁴*Ibid.*, Tax Record 4/177. Why Lucy did not sell the house after 1896 is not clear.

³⁵*Reminiscences*, 10-11.

of World War II. The picture she painted of her Southern background was certainly grander than reality permitted. Her parents were not plantation owners, though they did own four of the various cotton fields visible across the river. On arrival in 1878 Lucy had bought as an investment seven hundred and twenty acres. They were promptly mortgaged, apparently rented out,³⁶ and in 1894 were lost to a British mortgage company, which in turn had to wait six years to find a new buyer for the low-lying fields.³⁷ Moreover, by the 1890s the Burleson home was practically a ruin and presumably the garden with it.³⁸ Not surprisingly, she did not mention the clapboard frame house where she lived from about 1887 until 1894. Still she retained fond memories of the Burleson house, keeping a picture of it all her life; and in later years she remarked to her daughter several times how she would like to see it again.³⁹

Grace appears to have been a popular little girl with her neighbors and their children, descendants of whom recalled their parents telling of playing with Grace, dirtying their clothes sliding down the red clay banks in the neighborhood.⁴⁰ Ciara Berry Sanders remembered her mother telling a story that suggested that Grace was a thoughtful and well brought up adolescent. Her mother, Evelyn Wyker Hunt, had a Victorian playhouse equipped with a workable miniature iron range, on which her girlfriends would prepare meals. When it came time to clean up, invariably, only Grace would stay to help.⁴¹ For a while she went away to a private school, but for financial reasons she ended up at the Decatur public school, largely attended by poor whites.⁴²

³⁶The "1880 Agricultural & Manufacturing Census Records" for Limestone County do not list the land as being farmed by the Hindses (microfilm produced by the University of North Carolina Library, reel 228).

³⁷Deed Books 18/276-277 and 68/341 of the Limestone County Probate Judge's Office, Limestone County Archives and Plat Book # 3, township 4, range 5, section 25, 31, 35, and 36 of the Tax Assessor's Office, Limestone County Courthouse, Athens, Alabama.

³⁸"The McEntire Home," 4.

³⁹The remark was made by Lady Curzon's daughter to a distant relative from Arab, Alabama in 1978.

⁴⁰Telephone interview on September 18, 1981 with Marjorie Pointer Garner of Decatur, Alabama.

⁴¹Telephone interview on September 18, 1981 with Clara Berry Sanders of Newnan, Georgia.

⁴²*Reminiscences*, 10-11. It proved impossible to identify the private school she attended.

Idyllic though Grace tried to paint her childhood, she had to admit there was a jarring note: her family were carpet-baggers and disliked by many in Decatur. Even Grace could sense that they were not deemed socially acceptable by some of the older families of Decatur. "A certain sense of strangeness and discomfort surrounded us there, Republicans in an area of Democrats, Episcopalians in the midst of Methodists."⁴³ I was conscious of this feeling even as a child attending the local school," she subsequently wrote.⁴⁴ Having regained control of public offices in the 1870s and federal appointments in the 1880s, Southerners were now practicing a policy of ostracism for the remaining carpetbaggers and scalawags somewhat akin to the policies of the Irish Land League vis-a-vis English land owners in Ireland. As the Alabama historian Sarah Wiggins has noted, "Ostracism was all too real for most Republicans."⁴⁵ Decatur seems to have been a place where Republicans had been marked for persecution, according to one eyewitness, "in all possible way and manner."⁴⁶

This ostracism appears to have had a profound impact on Grace. It left her feeling an outsider with no attachment to her locality or even to the country of her birth. More importantly, the resentment she felt created in her a desire to prove Decatur wrong for shunning her family and herself. In an age when options for ambitious women were limited, she ultimately turned to the most glamorous one available and one for which she had great talent, that of a grande dame of society. She evidently concluded that she would not suffer social ostracism again. Of the numerous American society hostesses found in London just before and after World War I none had as unnerving a childhood, or for that matter as modest a background, as Grace.⁴⁷ None was more successful than she was

⁴³This remark about Methodists is somewhat curious since her Uncle Jerome was one; perhaps she meant Baptists.

⁴⁴*Reminiscences*, 10.

⁴⁵Sarah W. Wiggins, "Ostracism of White Republicans in Alabama during Reconstruction," *Alabama Review*, XXVII (January, 1974), 64.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 59.

⁴⁷Nancy Astor nee Langhorne was actually born poorer than Grace but her family's fortune steadily increased, while Grace's declined. Moreover, as a child of an old Virginia family, she experienced none of the ostracism Grace did. Laura Corrigan was also poorer than Grace as a child — her father was a carpenter and for a while she was a waitress in Chicago — but she entered the social scene about the time Grace left it (see Ruth Brandon's *The Dollar Princesses*. [New York, 1980], 143-44).

in winning acceptance by all ranks of British society.

By way of digression it should be noted that Grace's subsequent career was not unlike that of another extraordinary Alabama female, Alva Smith of Mobile. In the 1880s and 1890s Alva enjoyed the same social success in New York society that Grace came to achieve in London in the early twentieth century. The daughter of a Southern planter ruined by the war, Alva was determined to add a new chapter in the history of her ancient family. In 1874 she married W. K. Vanderbilt, the grandson of the Commodore. Shortly thereafter, she built the largest mansion in New York City, then forced the "Mrs. Astor" to call on her. She next pushed the Vanderbilts into the center of New York society, and in 1895 made her only daughter, Consuelo, marry the ninth Duke of Marlborough. Ultimately, she abandoned the United States for France where she continued to build mansions until her death in 1933. It is tempting to suggest that Grace modeled herself on Alva but there is no evidence to prove it. Neither was Alva well known in Alabama when Grace was growing up nor does Grace mention Alva in her autobiography, though their paths probably crossed at some point in the 1920s. Still the similarities of their lives suggest that Grace's response to her Alabama environment was not an isolated occurrence.⁴⁸

No doubt aware that the growing hostilities surrounding Grace were having an unfortunate impact on her, the Hindses decided to send her to South America to be educated. At about the age of sixteen, she left Decatur with her uncle and aunt from Rio, then on a world tour. She took away only psychological scars; she had learned none of the skills that would later make her a successful hostess. At most her subsequent interest in horse racing might have stemmed from a love of horses gained in Decatur. Still, she later wrote that "My heart was broken" at having to leave and, if permitted she would have jumped off the train.⁴⁹ That probably was more a

⁴⁸Although there is no biography of Alva Vanderbilt, her life is sketched out in James Brough's *Consuelo. Portrait of an American Heiress*. (New York, 1979). A portrait of Alva hangs at Oakleigh in Mobile donated by Consuelo.

⁴⁹*Reminiscences*, 12. In the autograph book of one of her girlfriends, Vera Austell, Grace promised her enduring friendship "tho' oceans may divide us" (taken from a scrapbook of newspaper clippings and other information entitled "The Life of Grace Hinds Curzon, Marchioness Curzon of Kedleston," compiled by Leon Hinds

reflection of the love she had for her parents and neighbors whom she was leaving behind than Decatur itself.⁵⁰

Her heart mended by the time she reached Washington, where she met her first celebrity, ironically Grover Cleveland.⁵¹ The experience of her first trip and meeting celebrities also made a positive impression on her. She would subsequently devote much of her life to travel and to entertaining famous politicians and grandees. She never returned to Decatur and it is easy to get the impression that she regarded her years in Alabama as a chapter in her life that, while formative, she wished closed. The tone of her autobiography gives the impression that she was proud of being a Southerner but not necessarily an Alabamian.⁵² She could identify with the love of grace and hospitality for which the old South was famous; she could not identify with the brutality and violence that came increasingly to characterize a segregated Alabama. Only once prior to the publication of her autobiography in 1955 did it become public knowledge in England that she was from Alabama.⁵³ She never included this information in any of her entries in *Who's Who*. When the mother of a childhood friend from Decatur, Mrs. John D. Wyker, then visiting London in the 1920s tried to reopen that chapter, Grace refused to see her. The snub shocked people in Decatur who had only pleasant memories of Grace as a young girl, and it is still

in the Heritage Room of the Huntsville Public Library). The autograph book has since been lost.

⁵⁰After Grace's departure, her family did not linger much longer in Decatur, owing to their financial plight. Within a year they had emigrated to Buenos Aires. Evidently Monroe eventually became uncomfortable living off his in-laws. With the aid of his sister, Mrs. Em Griffeth, one of the earliest women civil servants in Washington, D.C., he got an appointment after the Spanish-American War in the postal service of the newly annexed Philippines. There he died in 1901. His body was returned to Huntsville and buried with those of his children in the Maple Hill Cemetery. His wife chose not to accompany him. After coming into her inheritance, she settled in London, with two of her children, Trillia and Anita; her other son, Albert, remained in Buenos Aires, where he prospered in business. By the time Monroe's family left Decatur, Jerome had moved to Washington, where after abandoning his second wife Clara, he rejoined the army and fought in the Spanish-American War. The only Hinds left in Decatur was John Baxter, who had managed to retain his appointment as postmaster.

⁵¹A visit arranged by her Aunt Griffeth, who was also her Godmother.

⁵²In *Reminiscences*, 9, she stresses the fact that though her father and his brothers fought in the "Northern Army", they were "Southerners."

⁵³In the *Times* obituary of her first husband, she was described as "Grace Elvina Trillia, daughter of the late Mr. J. Monroe Hinds, of Alabama, U.S.A." (November 8, 1915).

remembered today.⁵¹ It certainly discouraged others from calling on her. Hudson Strode's observation in *South by Thunderbird* that Grace never failed to entertain royally old friends from Decatur appears, with one exception, unfounded.⁵²

Grace's world tour lasted nearly a year and included most of the principal sights of Western Europe and the Levant.⁵⁶ She fell in love with London and Paris, enjoyed visiting relatives in Italy, and was even captivated with Constantinople. Owing to her attractiveness, she was frequently handed flowers by young, starry-eyed Turks. Such attention must have enhanced her growing sense of femininity and awareness that she was good looking. She would subsequently spend large sums on dresses — principally by Worth — and jewelry to accentuate her beauty. She would also commission the principal portrait painters of her day, John Singer Sargent, Phillip de Laszlo, and Sir John Lavery, among others, to record it.⁵⁷

Once settled in Buenos Aires with rich relatives, Grace commenced a way of life in marked contrast with the modesty of her upbringing in Decatur. At this point Argentina was an economic colony of Britain and the life style of the wealthy

⁵¹There are several versions of how the snub took place. One is that Mrs. Wyker knocked on the door of Carlton House Terrace, identified herself to the butler; he returned with the message "Her Ladyship is not receiving." Another is that Mrs. Wyker phoned and received back such a message. In the post World War II period a former neighbor and childhood friend, Mrs. Foster H. Pointer was in Britain with her family. Someone suggested looking up the famous Lady Curzon. Mrs. Pointer declined for fear of "getting that same kind of cold shoulder as Mrs. Wyker" (interviews with Kathleen McEntire, November 21, 1978 and Ann Tankerley, August 25, 1981 at Decatur, Alabama; telephone interviews with Marjorie Garner and Clara Sanders, *op. cit.*).

⁵²Hudson Strode, *South by Thunderbird*. (New York, 1937), 240-41. The 1936 article in the Huntsville *Times* reported that Henry Scott of Atlanta was well received by Grace on a visit in the 1930s; that he was an old friend of the Hindses' from Decatur.

⁵⁶Grace wrote that she left when she was fifteen which would make the year 1893; that she crossed the Atlantic on the maiden voyage of the S.S. Furst Bismarck; that the boxer, Jim Corbett, was a fellow passenger; and that they arrived in England in March. There are several problems here. Firstly, the maiden voyage of the Bismarck was in 1891; Corbett crossed in the autumn of 1894; and the published schedule of the Bismarck shows no crossing in February or March. Presumably she was sixteen and the crossing was in the autumn of 1894. This matches the purchase of the Hinds home by Grace's uncle from Rio (see above footnote 32).

⁵⁷The portrait by de Laszlo is in the possession of her heirs; the one by Sargent, at the Tate Gallery, London; the one by F. M. Bennett hangs at Kedleston, and the Lavery is at the National Gallery of Art, Edinburgh. Rodin wanted to do a bust of her, but to her subsequent regret, Alfred refused to allow it.

was modeled on that of their English counterparts. Although an outsider, Grace found herself popular and presumably came gradually to realize how much she enjoyed being a member of society. Ultimately, she concluded that she had enormous talent as a hostess. She took Spanish, voice, riding lessons and went for carriage rides in the afternoon along the Palermo to the fashionable Calle Florida where tea would be taken at Agulia's. Some afternoons she drove to the River Tigre to watch the regattas. "My coming-out ball took place when I was seventeen, and after that I had a gay time of dances, balls, and picnics."⁵⁸ Her other activities included hunting and peregrinations from one grand house to another. A little later she began making yearly trips to London to do her shopping. One popular pursuit of hers, that has long since ceased to be the prerogative of the rich, was roller-skating. It was, in fact, owing to her fashionable American skating boots, that she caught the eye of her future husband.⁵⁹

In 1902 Grace married Alfred Duggan, the scion of a wealthy Argentinean family. Among other properties, the Duggans owned eighteen plantations and vast herds of sheep and cattle. One estate that Grace subsequently inherited had on it a private railway line nearly ninety miles long. As a wedding gift from her mother-in-law, she received a large house, completely furnished. The honeymoon was spent in England, where she attended Ascot for the first time. In due course, Grace became the mother of two sons and a daughter. Having seen social life in London, she eventually wearied of the limited social life of Buenos Aires and began spending a large part of each year in England. Eventually, the Duggans came to feel more at home there than in the Argentine.⁶⁰

At this point Great Britain was at the height of her worldly success. The Empire covered one-fifth of the globe, the Royal Navy controlled all the sea lanes, and London was the world's financial capital. It was also the Edwardian era, when British society entertained on a scale never previously or subsequently surpassed — the heyday of fetes and balls and of the weekend in the country. Although Paris glittered,

⁵⁸*Reminiscences*, 21.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 13-21.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, 22-27.

Edward VII during his decade as King-Emperor made London the most brilliant capital of Europe. Naturally it was a magnet for someone as eager to prove herself a great hostess as Grace Hinds Duggan.

In 1906 the Duggans decided to move to London, ostensibly in order to raise their two sons as English gentlemen. As a social entree, Alfred got himself made an honorary attache to the Argentine Legation. In order to secure the blessing of her father-in-law for the move, Grace was obligated to carry with the family to England a cow, a calf, six turkeys, and a large bevy of chickens. Senor Duggan was much worried about the quality of fresh milk and food his grandchildren would receive on a long sea voyage. On arrival Grace wasted no time in securing temporary accommodation in one of London's best neighborhoods, Eaton Square, and soon leased not far from London a small country estate, Burfield, near Windsor adjacent to the royal park.⁶¹

Grace began her conquest of British society on a modest scale. Her first parties were small affairs, usually weekends in the country. One imagines that she missed no opportunity to extend her contacts and learn the ways of a successful hostess. As she got to know people, she entertained more lavishly. By 1913 she had become sufficiently well established to make the Court Circular for the first time.⁶² From then until 1956 it recorded her various entertainments, and, once she was titled, her various trips and illnesses. While certain older circles remained closed to the wife of an Argentinean diplomat, she was, at least at this point, being invited to all of society's gala affairs. In 1913 Alfred's father died, leaving him a fortune in the millions. Grace could now rent a home in the most prestigious neighborhood in London, Grovenor Square, the future site of the American Embassy. By the eve of World War I she was entertaining there the Prime Minister, H. H. Asquith, who had an eye for attractive young ladies, cabinet members, and the leading literary figures of the day.⁶³

⁶¹*Ibid.*, 27-34.

⁶²It read "The Earl and Countess of Portalington and the Earl and Countess of Drogheda will be the guests of Mrs. Duggan at Burfield, Old Windsor, for the Household Brigade Steeplechases at Hawthorne Hill on Friday and Saturday" (*Times*, April 14, 1913).

⁶³*Reminiscences*, 44-48.

Her success was largely due to her good looks, taste, expensive clothes, and common sense. In a monarchical society dominated by old families, she opted to present herself as "an old fashioned admirer of dignity and deportment."⁶¹ She was greatly helped in being "launched" by the success of her first appearance at Court, just behind Nancy Astor, in 1907. King Edward too had an eye for beautiful women and found her so stunning that he singled her out for special attention.⁶⁵ Presumably that also helped to get her invitations accepted by the smart set within London society. She made friends easily with the English yet did not shun all fellow Americans. One of her first acquaintances was Lady Randolph Churchill, Sir Winston's dazzling mother. Another was Consuelo, Duchess of Marlborough, Alva Smith's beautiful but unhappy daughter. While London society included quite a few American women, Grace was somewhat unique. She was not brassy like Nancy Astor, iconoclastic like Lady Randolph, or unpredictable like Lady Cunard. She was dignified, restrained, and dutifully respectful of convention. This ultimately made her acceptable in almost all quarters.

By the time war broke out in 1914 Grace had become a respected member of London society. Although by no means was she one of the grand dames, her hospitality was readily accepted. She was also on the verge of another great turning point in her life: in 1914 Alfred contracted a strange ailment which confined him to a nursing home. She saw no reason to play the role of a bedside wife. Her philosophy was "I have always believed that if you take a gay and cheerful view of things, other people are more likely to share your view than not." She enjoyed giving and going to parties because "there was always some fun to be got out of every social event, however solemn and formal."⁶⁶ Entertaining continued to fill a psychological need to be wanted and appreciated. Instead of withdrawing from her busy social life to be with Alfred, she continued entertaining within the limits imposed by the war as well as now doing society war work. She participated in bazaars, arranged concerts, ran her own convalescent home for Belgian soldiers, and organized money raising fetes. Her

⁶¹*Ibid.*, 33.

⁶²*Ibid.*, 29.

⁶³*Ibid.*, 150.

most notable fete was in May 1915 in aid of the War Emergency Entertainments at which the Queen's sister-in-law, Princess Alexander of Teck, represented the Royal Family.⁶⁷ In all she raised over one hundred thousand pounds for the war effort. At the same time, she took it upon herself to secure the admission of her two sons, Alfred and Hubert, to England's most exclusive private high school, Eton. In the autumn Alfred died of pneumonia, leaving her the bulk of his fortune.⁶⁸ Grace at thirty-seven was a multi-millionairess and the wealthiest widow in London.

Despite her wealth, her social position was not secure. She had no natural niche in British society upon which to fall back, no ancient family which was recognized as a pillar of society. She owed her place to her lavish entertaining that after 1915 she had to curtail. As a new widow, she was expected by society to withdraw into a lengthy period of mourning. Once that was over the exigencies of the war would prevent any return to the pre-1914 scale. Moreover, her rapid rise had created enemies, and one of her few weaknesses as a society figure, the banality of her own conversational skills, had made her a subject of derision in some circles.⁶⁹ Her schooling in Decatur and Buenos Aires had not prepared her to discuss at dinner the intricacies of French literature or the symbolism in Shakespeare. After meeting her for the first time, the Minister of Education in 1916 described her simply as "statuesque and stupid."⁷⁰ At some point in 1916 she seems to have committed an enormous faux pas. She accused the prime minister's wife, the sharp-tongued Margot Asquith, of having ordered from the famous provisioners Fortnum & Masons, a food parcel for a German prisoner at Gallipoli. Grace had witnessed the purchase from a nearby counter but had misunderstood what was said. She had the sense to apologize and to remain on good terms with Margot, who accepted

⁶⁷*Times*, May 22, 1915.

⁶⁸*Reminiscences*, 45-50.

⁶⁹Lt. Colonel C. A. Court Repington noted in his diary for July 16, 1916 of Grace "she is a very pretty women, most charming and restful, but has got many enemies, probably because she is such a success" (*The First World War, 1914-1918. Personal Experiences*, 2 vols. [London, 1920], I, 280).

⁷⁰H.A.L. Fisher to Lettice Fisher, December, 1916. Fisher Papers, Box 5, Bodleian Library, Oxford, England. Fisher's opinion did not change on getting to know Grace better. Writing in 1922 he declared: "Grace Curzon (stupid as ever)" (Box 5).

the apology but who probably said some pretty devastating things behind Grace's back.⁷¹ Although Grace prized the freedom Alfred's death had brought her, she nevertheless needed a new husband to protect her in more ways than one.

Unbeknownst to Grace, she had already caught the eye of one of Britain's most eligible widowers, Earl Curzon of Kedleston. Curzon was a member of a famous noble family which had first come to England with William, Duke of Normandy in 1066, eventually settling in Derbyshire. In the eighteenth century the great architect and interior decorator, Robert Adam, transformed the family seat, Kedleston Hall, into what remains one of England's most beautiful homes. There George Curzon was born in 1859. His precociousness led many to expect great things from him. He did not disappoint them, winning most of the principal prizes at Eton and Oxford. Interested in politics, he moved from one Parliamentary triumph to another, becoming in 1898 the youngest person ever made viceroy of India. He was thirty-nine. By then he was the father of three daughters through his very happy marriage to Mary Leiter, the daughter of a wealthy Chicago meatpacker. In 1905 after a highly successful though somewhat controversial period as viceroy, he resigned. Shortly thereafter, in rapid succession, his political party, the Conservatives, which had dominated Parliament since 1896, was swept out of the office, and his beloved Mary died of heart failure. Her death created a void in his life that could not be filled, and the loss of political office placed him in the political wilderness, where he remained for ten years. In 1915 the vicissitudes of war led to the formation of a coalition government in which Curzon became lord privy seal. At fifty-six George began a political comeback; a new chapter in his life commenced.⁷²

⁷¹Margot certainly told her daughter-in-law, who recorded the story in her diary (Lady Cynthia Asquith, *Diaries, 1915-1918* [London, 1968], 446). According to Lady Cynthia's account, Grace mistook Margot saying "Donnington Hall" for "the Dardanelles."

⁷²There are three complete biographies of Curzon: the official one by the earl of Ronaldshay, *The Life of Lord Curzon*, 3 vols. (London, 1928); Leonard Mosley's *Curzon, The End of an Epoch*. (London 1960); and Kenneth Rose's *Superior Person*. (New York, 1969). A biography concerned only with Curzon as foreign secretary is Harold Nicolson's *Curzon: The Last Phase, 1919-1925*. (New York, 1939).

Curzon's period out of office had one consolation: it enabled him to devote much time to spending that part of the Leiter fortune entrusted to him. Although Curzon was Mary's heir, the bulk of her father's fortune was entailed in trusts for Mr. Leiter's granddaughters, with George as the executor until they came of age. George was an heir in his own right, but so long as his father lived, the Curzon wealth was unavailable. Fortunately for him the Leiter revenues in themselves were massive enough to offer him a highly luxuriant life style.⁷³ He maintained three splendid residences. His London home was in one of the capital's most prestigious building complexes, Carlton House Terrace, that masterpiece of town planning by George IV and John Nash. It overlooked the Mall and St. James Park; Queen Alexandra the Queen Mother resided a few yards away at Marlborough House. George also leased two country estates. One was Dorset's most beautiful Renaissance mansion, Montescute, and the other was an eighteenth-century estate, Hackwood, in Kent, grand enough for the king and queen of the Belgians to use as a palace-in-exile during the first stages of the war. Each home had its own housekeeper, staff and complete sets of china, crystal, and silver. George also owned several historical ruins, such as the beautiful fourteenth-century Bodiam Castle in Sussex, with which he amused himself by supervising the restoration.

At fifty-six George still had three unfulfilled dreams. He desired an heir, wanted to be prime minister, and sought to cap his achievements with a dukedom. At his age he could only consider as a second wife a widow; for someone in his position a teenage bride was quite out of the question. She would have to be wealthy so he could continue to live the life style to which he was accustomed. His own financial difficulties dictated that. His father still lived and his three daughters would soon come of age. A new wife would also have to be a gifted hostess in order to cope with the hospitality required of a government official, a prominent member of society, and aspiring prime minister turned duke. She would also have to be young enough to produce the much sought-after heir.

⁷³Mary's father, Levi Z. Leiter, left an estate worth about thirty million dollars. The income on Mary's share provided Curzon with about a hundred thousand dollars a year (Nigel Nicolson, *Mary Curzon*. [New York, 1977], 17, 174).

In 1915 there was one pressing reason why George should begin looking for a new wife. Since 1908 he had been having an affair with the volatile, popular novelist, Elinor Glyn, whose husband was an invalid. For Curzon it was simply an affair of convenience. Suddenly in 1915 Mr. Glyn died, leaving Elinor free to remarry; and she expected a proposal from George. From George's point of view Grace was suddenly the answer to all of his problems. She had wealth, poise, beauty and was a gifted hostess; moreover, she had a proven track record with two sons and at thirty-seven she was still young enough to produce an heir.⁷⁴

George first saw Grace at a ball at Lady Londesborough's early in 1915. She was standing by a tall pillar in a pink formal dress. He was much struck by her beauty and, after their engagement, had her photographed in the same dress at the same spot. Shortly after learning that Grace's husband had contracted an incurable disease, George made his first move. He got his old friend, Violet, Duchess of Rutland, to invite Grace and himself to a dinner party. Thereafter they dined often together; he was soon a guest at her weekend parties in the country. After Alfred's death, Curzon joined Grace for Christmas, bringing his daughters, with whom she got along well. Hereafter George regularly brought up the subject of marriage. While flattered that a member of the British Cabinet, and so aristocratic a one at that, should be interested in her, Grace initially avoided the subject. She liked her freedom and felt her children, especially her daughter, Marcella, who was still at home, needed her. Moreover, she was not enamoured with the idea of a betrothal to someone nearly twenty years older than she was.⁷⁵

For several reasons her mind changed in 1916. Gradually she began to realize how vulnerable her position was as merely the widow of an honorary Argentinean diplomat. Her attitude toward George changed. In March George's father died, thus easing his financial situation. At least he would not be marrying her solely for reasons of money. As the fortunes of the Conservative party continued to rise, so did George's. The time could not be far off when the present government would

⁷⁴Mosley, chapter 9.

⁷⁵*Reminiscences*, 46-68.

be reconstituted and George would hold one of the principal offices of state. As his wife she would not only be titled, but one of London's, and hence the Empire's, principal leaders of society; all doors would be opened to her at last. Moreover, the fulfillment of George's ambitions would earn her a place in the history books: she would be the first American wife of a prime minister. She would also be the first American to become a duchess by her own merits and not the millions of her father.⁷⁶ In the summer of 1916 she accepted George's proposal. By the time of the wedding in January 1917 the government had been reorganized with George a member of the powerful and exclusive War Cabinet and leader of the House of Lords. The new prime minister's wife, Mrs. Lloyd George, eschewed entertaining, thus creating a social vacuum into which Grace could move.⁷⁷ By virtue of a quiet wedding at the fashionable St. Margaret's Chapel, Westminster, Grace Hinds of Decatur, the daughter of an Alabama carpetbagger, became Countess Curzon of Kedleston, Viscountess Scarsdale, and Baroness Ravensdale, the principal social hostess of one of the most important governments in modern British history.⁷⁸ She was thirty-nine.

Grace now found herself in an even more rarefied world than the one in which she had been living. George was a close friend of various monarchs throughout Europe. After moving into Carlton House Terrace, one of her first telephone calls was from Albert, King of the Belgians. When Albert identified himself as such, she thought the call a hoax and retorted "Is it really? And this is Queen Anne!" She apologized.⁷⁹ George was good friends with the royal family, who wished to meet the new Lady Curzon. Grace soon found herself at Windsor chatting with Queen Mary, who told her of having received a favorable report from Princess Alexander on the

⁷⁶Three of the four American born duchesses — the dowager Duchess of Manchester (Consuelo Yznaga), the Duchess of Marlborough (Consuelo Vanderbilt), and the Duchess of Roxburghe (May Goelet) were the daughters of New York millionaires; the Duchess of Manchester (Helena Zimmerman), the daughter of a Cleveland millionaire.

⁷⁷Mosley, 177-78.

⁷⁸The *Times*' wedding announcement gave no information about Grace's background other than she was the widow of "Mr. Alfred Duggan of Buenos Aires" (January 3, 1917).

⁷⁹*Reminiscences*, 90.

fete Grace had organized in 1915.⁸⁰ She got on well with King George with whom she shared an interest in horse racing. Throughout their lives George and Mary regarded Grace with affection and concern.

Grace also found herself appearing at public functions with George. Sometimes she would open a new canteen while he would orate on some aspect of the war. She continued her charity work and her entertaining.⁸¹ She incurred the opprobrium of several of the London dailies when she gave a coming-out party for one of George's daughters in 1918 while the fate of the war hung in the balance on the Western Front.⁸² More successful were her dinner parties and receptions for various Dominion prime ministers and Indian princes. She gave her first large official party as Lady Curzon in June 1918, overcoming various war-time difficulties, when all the living past prime ministers, the cabinet, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the various officials attending the Imperial War Cabinet Lloyd George had summoned, dined at Carlton House Terrace.⁸³ At Christmas when Woodrow Wilson visited London en route to the Peace Conference, Grace helped entertain Wilson's wife, with whom she had much in common.⁸⁴

With the return of peace in November 1918 and her husband's appointment as foreign secretary shortly thereafter, Grace could now fully assume the responsibilities as the principal governmental hostess. The Curzons' combined fortunes produced entertainment on a lavish scale. Through their doorways on a regular basis came the kings and queens of England, Belgium, Spain, and Portugal, the Prince of Wales, major world leaders, diplomats, British politicians, writers, plus

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, 110.

⁸¹See for example the *Times* for April 23, 1917 and July 11, 1918.

⁸²*Reminiscences*, 86.

⁸³*Ibid.*, 131. Of this party Grace wrote "it was generally considered to have been a success," and then listed some of her dinner guests.

⁸⁴Edith Bolling Wilson, *My Memoir*. (New York, 1938), 205. Edith Wilson, who was six years older than Grace, was from an old Southern family which lost most of its wealth during the Civil War. After a modest childhood, she married a successful Washington business man, Norman Galt, who died young, leaving her at thirty-four a prosperous business. In 1915 she married Wilson, who was sixteen years older than she was. He died in 1924, a year before George. For the rest of her long widowhood she devoted herself to safeguarding her second husband's memory. After publishing her memoirs, she died in 1961, three years after Grace.

prominent society members from New York, Paris, and London, all part of Grace's responsibilities as the foreign secretary's wife. She also had duties to perform at court whenever there would be royal levees for the diplomatic corps; these she especially enjoyed. "Before the entry of the King and Queen I had to be standing by the great doors leading to the throne room with the Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps. I still feel the thrill of excitement which the roll of drums and the National anthem gave me as the royal procession entered the throne room."⁸⁵

Entertainment on such a scale had its rewards. The Curzons received endless invitations. Grace's autobiography at this point reads like a catalogue of who entertained whom. Other rewards came in 1921 when the King raised George in the peerage to a marquis in recognition of his public service. Grace now became the Marchioness Curzon of Kedleston, the name by which she is remembered. Her reward for war service and her entertainment was to become the following year the first woman invested with the Grand Cross of the British Empire.⁸⁶

Although her life during this period is detailed in her autobiography, several of the more memorable soirees should be mentioned here. One was when the very rotund King of Persia, Ahmad Mirza Shaw, rolled down part of the grand staircase at Carlton House Terrace in full view of all her guests. Grace and the future George VI, by whom she was standing, were hard pressed to keep from bursting into laughter. On another occasion the butler, in lighting a cigarette for

⁸⁵*Reminiscences*, 115. Grace's description continued:

As soon as the King and Queen had taken their place on the dais my train would be taken from my arm and spread. I would make three low curtseys at the entrance of the throne room, take a few steps forward with the Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps holding my hand, which he would release while I made three more curtseys — then a curtsey to the King, a curtsey to Queen Mary, and another curtsey to the King and he took my hand to help me up on to the dais. There I would stand until the ladies of the Diplomatic Corps had passed. I would then step down from the dais, curtsey again to the King and to the Queen, and walk to my seat near the dais, where I had to remember not to sit down until all the Ambassadors and the other gentlemen of the Diplomatic Corps had passed, because the King and Queen were still standing.

⁸⁶The fact that she was first was partly because "Curzon" came before "Hughes" in the alphabet; she shared the award with Mrs. Billy Hughes, the wife of the Australian prime minister during the war (*New York Times*, January 2, 1922).

the queen of Portugal, accidentally set fire to her veil. The mischievous Lady Cunard promptly turned to Grace and — in a tone of reproachment — remarked “Gracie! The Queen of Portugal is on fire.” The unflappable Grace coolly responded “Oh, so she is!” The queen was duly extinguished.⁸⁷

One of the innovations Grace introduced into the socials of her day was cocktails. Coming from a part of the states where cocktails, such as mint juleps, were popular, Grace was aware of their social usefulness at an early age.⁸⁸ Although “American bars” could be found in Paris and London before the war, the presence of so many American troops helped popularize cocktails even more. Grace found them useful in entertaining, especially international guests who did not share the English love of sherry, and she frequently had a cocktail bar at her soirees. In her autobiography she devoted a few lines to the utilitarian value of cocktails along with George’s response to this innovation.

In those days, just at the end of the 1914 War, cocktails were considered rather an innovation where formal entertaining was concerned, but many of the younger people liked them, and they helped to make a party ‘go’. I knew that it would have caused delays and complications upstairs if they had been handed round in the drawing-room before dinner, and so I decided to have a cocktail bar in a room off the hall, where our guests could have a drink before coming up to the drawing-room. The first time that I arranged this, I had it all done by Buck’s Club, and men in white coats with cocktail shakers were stationed behind a bar in the room on the ground floor. George, making a tour of inspection before the party, discovered this and could not imagine what it was for, because I had forgotten to tell him about it. He said to one of the men,

⁸⁷ *Reminiscences*, 132-33, 135.

⁸⁸ The origins of cocktails is obscure, but one of the places where they began was New Orleans. In the nineteenth century a cocktail consisted of alcohol, sugar, water, and bitters. There is some evidence that Grace’s father was a heavy consumer of them. Today still at George’s old college, Balliol, a “Lady Curzon” is served on special occasions. Grace’s friend, Lady Randolph Churchill was responsible for introducing the “Manhattan” cocktail in New York society (D. Wallechinsky and I. Wallace, *The People’s Almanac* #2. [New York, 1978], 431).

"Who are you?" and the man replied, "We're Bucks, my lord." This mystified George completely, and the man went on, "Will your lordship have a cocktail?" George then rose to the occasion, and asked, "What have you got?" A White Lady⁸⁹ was suggested, and George had one, which he swallowed without comment, and I don't think that he ever had another cocktail in his life.⁹⁰

The one person who never appears to have crossed the threshold of Carlton House Terrace was Tallulah Bankhead, whose success on the London stage started early in 1923 with "The Dancers." Although Grace attended the 1925 premiere of "The Green Hat," she seems never to have made any attempt to establish contact with her fellow Alabamian.⁹¹ Her friends, including Lady Cunard did, and Lady Diana Duff Cooper, the daughter of the same Duchess of Rutland, who had introduced George to Grace became, for a while, one of Tallulah's best friends.⁹² Possibly Tallulah's scandalous private life and fast living friends — the Bright Young Things — had something to do with it; perhaps she simply did not want to be reminded of her Alabama past.

Grace made one interesting foray into British diplomacy. At the Lausanne Conference in 1923 Grace briefly joined George, then in the midst of his most notable diplomatic triumph as foreign secretary. At a luncheon party she met Benito Mussolini, the new Fascist premier of Italy. She conversed with him in Spanish; he to her in Italian. She admonished him for not being able to speak English, now the principal language of modern diplomacy. Eager to live up to the image of a man of action, he agreed to start learning at once and promised to send her in exactly two months' time a letter he would have written in English. He sealed the promise by sending her the next day the largest basket of flowers she ever received. Exactly two months to the day Grace received his letter, which according to the New York

⁸⁹A "White Lady" consists of gin, Cointreau, lemon juice, and egg whites.

⁹⁰*Reminiscences*, 106.

⁹¹Lee Israel, *Miss Tallulah Bankhead*. (New York, 1972), 106. Neither Tallulah (*Tallulah*. [New York, 1952]) nor Grace mentioned the other in their respective autobiographies.

⁹²*Ibid.*, 84. Kieran Tunney, *Tallulah. Darling of the Gods*. (New York, 1973), 59.

Times was "a long breezy letter, even idiomatic in spots."⁹³ Whereas the New York *Times* seemed to have no doubts that Mussolini wrote it, Grace did not for a moment believe it; but since they never met again, she was unable to test his boast with a conversation.⁹⁴

The glamour of her public life helped to offset the vicissitudes of her marriage. During the war she took seriously her need to be by George's side in public. She also tried to produce him an heir. For whatever reason, and it is not clear what, the heir was not forthcoming. One doctor had suggested that George might have been the problem; that at his age his sperm count could have been inadequate for conception.⁹⁵ The blame, however, fell on Grace. George insisted she undergo an operation. It did not solve the problem and the pain involved seemed to have left a bitter aftertaste.⁹⁶ Moreover, Grace gradually came to realize how difficult it was to live with George. Although brilliant, he was a pompous workaholic, who could delegate little authority either to her or anyone else. He usurped many of the responsibilities that by right were Grace's: menu-planning, the hiring of staff, the distribution of books to weekend guests, the household accounts. Only because he disliked organizing receptions did he leave that responsibility to her. Moreover, he wanted her to conform to the mold of marriage that had characterized his relationship with Mary Leiter, over thirty years before. At that time, Mary's friends had been shocked at how she had subordinated her personality and interests in order to adopt to George's image of a perfect wife and to fit his career goals.⁹⁷ Whereas George loved Grace and very much wanted her affection, he seemed incapable at his age of adopting a new approach to marriage with someone nearly twenty years his junior.

Grace, in response, was not prepared to be dominated by George. She was too strong-willed, self-centered and youthful. She probably realized that she could never replace Mary Leiter as the greatest love of his life. She resented his interference

⁹³New York *Times*, October 10, 1927.

⁹⁴*Reminiscences*, 166-67.

⁹⁵Interview on September 25, 1981 with Omar Baker in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

⁹⁶Mosley, 179-80

⁹⁷Nicolson, *Mary Curzon*, 84.

in her traditional role as chatelaine of four great houses.⁹⁸ Within nine months of the marriage, she was complaining "George works so hard and sits up so late. He often doesn't come to bed till 2:30 but stays down writing out the menus for the servants in his different country houses."⁹⁹ She disliked his intellectual interests and found political talk boring. More than once she ruined serious after dinner conversations.¹⁰⁰ Although she enjoyed literature, social gossip was the normal extent of her intellectual interests. Not without reason was her conversational level described as "briskly banal."¹⁰¹ No doubt she felt ill at ease with some of the intellectual women George liked to invite to weekend parties.¹⁰² By 1919, a growing number of factors led Grace to complain openly about her marriage with George. One diarist, whom Grace hardly knew, recorded: "They say she is completely 'fed up' with George Nathaniel and I am not surprised."¹⁰³

The Curzon marriage can be divided into three phases. The first during which Grace conformed to George's wishes lasted until the end of the war. The second lasted until about the beginning of 1924. During this period Grace increasingly did as she wished when not otherwise obligated by duties as wife of the foreign secretary. Except when entertaining at Carlton House Terrace, she seldom stayed at home. She accepted the endless invitations that poured in. She traveled frequently to the Continent — receiving as the foreign secre-

⁹⁸In her autobiography, *The Glitter and Gold* (New York, 1952), 175, Consuelo Vanderbilt Balsan gave an example of George's interference with Grace's responsibilities. On being shown her bedroom at Hackwood, Consuelo recorded Grace, then pointing to a stack of bedside books, as saying "George has chosen them, so you will like them. I had myself selected the books to be placed in every visitor's room, but when George inspected them he decided that I had not correctly assessed the literary tastes of our expected guests and after sending a footman with a tray to collect the books he made a new selection."

⁹⁹Asquith, 360.

¹⁰⁰Helen, Viscountess D'Abernon, *Red Cross and Berlin Embassy, 1915-1926*. (London, 1946), 46-47. Lady D'Abernon made the following entry in her diary for November 10, 1918 after dining at the British Embassy in Paris: "Grace Curzon rather handicapped conversation by a series of irrelevant remarks."

¹⁰¹Asquith, 412.

¹⁰²*Ibid.* Lady Cynthia Asquith speculated that Grace "will be greatly in the way of his debating society parties at Hackwood." Presumably she was referring to the legendary group of society figures, the Souls, that before the war was noted for the intellectual brilliance of their gatherings and of which George was a member.

¹⁰³A.J.P. Taylor (ed.) *Lloyd George. A Diary by Frances Stevenson*. (New York, 1971), 185.

tary's wife deluxe treatment everywhere she went — and took up horse-racing, which after the London season sent her to Goodwood, Ascot, Newmarket, and other turf gatherings. She became temperamental toward George and was often rude. Frequently she accused him of still having an affair with Elinor Glyn.¹⁰⁴ On their second anniversary she even refused to allow him to join her at Hackwood. He protested but it did little to alleviate her frequent absences from his side. She also periodically cut off funds to him, invariably creating a financial crisis. In the midst of a major European conference in 1920, George was obliged to interrupt his labors to complain to her "Today the bank returned to me your two cheques of June 6 and July 6."¹⁰⁵

The marriage survived because they were dependent upon each other; George needed her money, he had lingering hopes for an heir, and he realized that she was an asset vis-a-vis his further ambitions. Perplexed by her behavior, he still loved her, and as an indefatigable letter-writer, he inundated her with proposals of reconciliations. The answers were often not encouraging. His replies included "I was so hurt at your letter this morning," "I have got your nasty letters."¹⁰⁶ On one occasion her rudeness was too much for him to bear meekly, and he took away the master key to his various homes. It says something of her social position then that the king of England got it back for her.¹⁰⁷

Grace too wanted the marriage to survive, but on her terms. She enjoyed the life style her marriage to George provided. In her way she may have loved him. On New Years Day 1923 she wrote from St. Moritz, "I send you all of my fondest love and wish you ever so many happy returns of our

¹⁰⁴George's engagement had abruptly ended his affair with Elinor Glyn, the announcement appearing without her being forewarned in the *Times*. In a rage she burned all his letters and never spoke to him again. Mosley implies in his biography of Curzon that Glyn, suspecting competition from Grace, had modeled the character of the ambitious American millionairess, Mrs. Cricklander, in her novel *Halcyone* on her. *Halcyone*, however, was published some three years before George laid eyes on Grace (149-50).

¹⁰⁵Mosley, 179-80, 193-94.

¹⁰⁶*Ibid.*, 193-94.

¹⁰⁷Grace treated this as a joke in her autobiography (114-15), but in 1946 she repeated the story to Chips Channon as an example of George's temperamental behavior (see Robert Rhodes James, *'Chips': The Diaries of Sir Henry Channon*. [London, 1970], 414).

anniversary.”¹⁰⁸ She obviously did not feel the need to be with him on that occasion. She was prepared to admit that she had been at fault most of the time and explained it on grounds that “I really suffer from having too much in my life.”¹⁰⁹ No doubt at this point, she was very pleased with the extraordinary success she had made of her life. At times she must have found it difficult to believe she had once been a little girl in “Sleepy” Decatur. Still, life with George could be tedious and demanding at times.

Another reason she wanted the marriage to survive stemmed from her interest in producing an heir. Whereas there is no reason to suppose that Grace, having had three children and approaching her early forties, had a maternal desire to repeat the process, the advantages to her would still be great. A baby boy would link her family with one of the oldest in England, would prevent those titles earned by George’s public service from becoming extinct, would keep the Kedleston wealth within her family, and would provide security and station for her after George’s death. Consequently, she continued to seek medical advice and cures. On the recommendation of the queen of the Belgians, she quietly slipped out of England in the autumn of 1921 to undergo a hot mud treatment at Langenschwalbach, Germany, for five weeks. The visit nearly led to a serious injury when she got lost walking in the nearby forest. Before she could find her way out, the sun set, the temperature plummeted, and for a long time there was no moon. “The hills are very steep, with deep precipices at places,” she wrote George afterwards. “I pray hard to be found. I also remember pleading in my prayer, ‘My worst fault is only my extravagance.’” Troops, the police, and the staff of the spa combed the forests but it was her maid and chauffeur who eventually found her.¹¹⁰ For someone with a fear of death, it was a trying experience.

Almost as unpleasant was the mud treatment itself. Daily she had to immerse herself in hot, sticky mud. When she emerged — “I am just like Tar Baby (I wonder if you have read Brer Rabbit?),” which says something about her child-

¹⁰⁸ *Reminiscences*, 172-73.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 127.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 123-25.

hood reading as a Southerner — she was so thickly coated that she speculated she could attend a reception and no one could tell her absence of clothes. Although the spa doctors assured her the cure had been a success, the results were the same.¹¹¹ To endure these discomforts and then to have to put up with George's demands and pomposity explains in part her recurrent arrogance toward him. There was one interesting consequence: because she found German soups insipid, she insisted at Langenschwalbach and at other spas she visited that the soup be spiced with sherry. Out of this eventually evolved a popular soup, laced with sherry known on both sides of the Atlantic as "Lady Curzon soup."¹¹²

Relations between Grace and George improved somewhat in 1923 when it appeared that George might be the next prime minister. The great war-time coalition had collapsed in 1922 but Curzon had remained foreign secretary in the new administration of the ailing Andrew Bonar Law. George also became deputy prime minister and the driving force of Bonar Law's government. A crisis developed in March 1923, when Law appeared unexpectedly in Paris to see a throat cancer specialist; he was accompanied by the press baron, Lord Beaverbrook. At the time Grace was also in Paris on a shopping spree and staying at the British Embassy. She was among the first to learn that Law was incurably ill and would have to resign. A friend with her urged that she go at once to solicit the support of Beaverbrook, a man powerful enough to have played a role in bringing down the two previous prime ministers and whose newspapers had frequently criticized George's handling of foreign affairs. It was pointed out that she had much to gain, little to lose. Grace refused; she loathed Beaverbrook and asserted that she would not go pleading to him. Moreover, as an American, she did not like meddling in British parliamentary affairs.¹¹³ Her aloofness was charac-

¹¹¹*Ibid.*, 121-22, 128.

¹¹²Often this soup is mistakenly attributed to the first Lady Curzon. For example see the Craig Claiborne article on Lady Curzon soup in the February 5, 1978 issue of the *New York Times* (section 6, 59). When asked why he had attributed it to the first Lady Curzon, Claiborne replied: "To my great embarrassment I must admit absolute ignorance apropos of the 2nd Lady Curzon" (Craig Claiborne to Russell Bryant, October 12, 1981). A recipe in the original German form can be found in Betty Wason's *The Art of German Cooking* (New York, 1967), 65.

¹¹³*Reminiscences*, 175-76.

teristic of the approach she and George took, that allowed the premiership to slip from his grasp.

Grace did not even return promptly to London, but continued her shopping "as George would almost certainly not want me to make a sudden change of plan in the circumstances."¹¹⁴ Once back in London, she readily agreed with his proposal to spend the Whitsuntide weekend at Montescute, while awaiting the royal summons. There, without any phone at their disposal, they discussed their plans for George's premiership. Among other things, they agreed that they would continue to reside at Carlton House Terrace and use 10 Downing Street only for official entertaining. Grace pledged to take her duties seriously as the wife of the prime minister.¹¹⁵ At last a telegram arrived from the King's secretary requesting an appointment the next day in London. The Curzons dutifully returned, with photographers beseiging them at every stop. At this point Grace's immediate concern was how she looked: she had a swollen right cheek as a result of an inflamed tooth.¹¹⁶ No doubt, a touch of pride that she was about to become the first American wife of a British prime minister passed through her thoughts. At Carlton House Terrace the blow fell. While the Curzons were away, George's enemies had moved quickly to convince the King that it was now impossible for a peer to run the government. An embarrassed secretary informed them that the King had decided for these reasons to pass over George for the relatively inexperienced Stanley Baldwin. George broke into tears; Grace was speechless. It was the end of a dream for both of them. Once over the shock, George sent his congratulations to Baldwin. Not having forgotten the misery of a decade in the political wilderness, he at least wanted to remain at the Foreign Office.¹¹⁷

After the crisis Grace made plans to visit Argentina. She wanted not only to check on her holdings but to contest the will of her brother-in-law, who an hour before his death had altered it so as to exclude Grace and her children from an

¹¹⁴*Ibid.*, 176.

¹¹⁵Mosley, 270-71.

¹¹⁶*Reminiscences*, 176-78.

¹¹⁷Nicolson, *Curzon*, 355-56.

inheritance of £4,200,000.¹¹⁸ It says something of her importance that she was entertained at her first port of call, Rio, by a banquet and reception for five hundred given by the Brazilian Foreign Office. The reception touched a sentimental note in her, and she wrote her mother that it was strange to think "of my little mother having been married and spent so much of her youth there — and that I should return to the same place in a position also to be made much of." On arrival at Montevideo she was greeted by the Argentinean President, Marcelo Torcuato de Alvear, and feted there as well.¹¹⁹ On leaving at the end of her stay, she threw a reception to which the president, the cabinet, the diplomatic corps and a large number of old friends came.¹²⁰ From a social point of view, the trip was a success. Judging from George's congratulations on the "tact and charm and the amazing success of your visit" the trip must also have been a financially successful one as well.¹²¹

By the time Grace reached England, Baldwin's Government had fallen. For the first time since May 1915 George had no governmental position. While he set about modernizing his beloved Kedleston, Grace embarked on another trip. No doubt, it proved a sombering experience since she was no longer entitled to a diplomatic passport and other traveling courtesies she had received in the past. It helped her to appreciate how much she benefited from being George's wife. In 1924 she had another reason to be grateful to George. As Chancellor of the University of Oxford, he was able to keep her two sons from being expelled for their rowdy behavior.¹²² Alfred and Hubert had grown up to be sartorially resplendent playboys, and a potential source of embarrassment. Alfred was already an avowed atheist and Marxist who saw nothing inconsistent with his left-wing views in keeping a chauffeur on call while at Balliol and in staying intoxicated.¹²³

About this time the Curzon marriage entered its third and final stage. By now each had learned to live with the other

¹¹⁸New York Times, December 7, 1923.

¹¹⁹Reminiscences, 219-21.

¹²⁰Times, December 19, 1923.

¹²¹Reminiscences, 222.

¹²²Evelyn Waugh, *A Little Learning*. (New York, 1964), 202.

¹²³Christopher Hollis, *Oxford in the Twenties*. (London, 1976), 83; Waugh, 202.

without too much rancor; and the marriage seemed to come together at last. On their seventh anniversary George wrote to her "I think we have had great happiness — if some trouble. But I don't think we need ever have any more of the latter again, and at any rate am proud of and devoted to my sweet wife."¹²⁴ Although she continued to go her own way, her account of their marriage in her autobiography suggests a change of heart at some point, most probably this one. In *Reminiscences* she wrote of this time, "now that the Conservatives were out of Office I saw more of George than at any time since our marriage. It seemed quite strange to have him joining me at the tea-table. We dined out more often. . . . This was a George entirely new to me."¹²⁵

Baldwin returned to office in November 1924. George was invited to join the government, but to his initial shock, as lord president of the Council, instead of the more important office of foreign secretary. He soon lost interest in all but the restoration of Kedleston. Periodically he heard a rumor that the King intended to make him a duke, the third of his great ambitions. Now it no longer mattered. In late February while about to deliver a speech in Cambridge, he suffered a fatal hemorrhage. Grace was not at his side when it happened, but she rushed to his rescue. No fault can be found with her conduct in the crisis that followed. To George's surprise, she nurtured him to the end, seldom leaving his side. Her wifely performance is even more remarkable in the light of the fact that Marcella, then traveling in Palestine, had become ill and was confined to a Jerusalem hospital. Grace held his hand nearly continuously for his last forty-eight hours, death coming on March 20, 1925. Although buried at Kedleston, George was given an impressive funeral service at Westminster Abbey, where his pallbearers included Prime Minister Baldwin, two former prime ministers, and the ranking member of the cabinet.¹²⁶ One observer noted, "I shall never forget the simple service and the great beauty of the bereft widow."¹²⁷ Only after all the eulogies had been said did she depart for Jerusalem,

¹²⁴*Reminiscences*, 213.

¹²⁶*Ibid.*, 227-29; Mosley, 285-86.

¹²⁵*Ibid.*, 223.

¹²⁷James, 7.

traveling on a diplomatic passport Baldwin allowed her to use.¹²⁸

Grace did not do badly out of George's will. Although the bulk of his wealth was tied up with the Kedleston Estate, he did leave her the leases to his various residences, the furnishings at Carlton House Terrace, an insurance policy worth £100,000 — though he stipulated that she use only the interest and return the policy to the Kedleston Estate in her will — and a jointure for life from the Estate of £1,000 a year "as it seems right that she could not be left without some maintenance from the estate whose name she bears," and finally his papers, books, and literary rights.¹²⁹ He hoped she would rent Kedleston from its new owner, Lord Scarsdale, and complete the restoration while giving up Hackwood. Not only did Grace not do that, she went to court and secured unrestricted right to the £100,000. Even more extraordinarily, she promptly spent £34,000 of it at a single dress maker in Paris.¹³⁰ George also left her so much of his own wealth from the Kedleston Estate that Scarsdale was soon forced to sell some of the Old Masters to pay the death duty and to complete the renovation with which George had saddled him.¹³¹

Grace discovered that there was one consolation in not having produced an heir. Although George's lesser titles in the United Kingdom peerage passed to his blood heirs, the marquessate, which was in the Irish peerage, did not and died with him. Hereafter, Grace solely bore the title by which he was remembered, unencumbered with the designation "dowager," that would have seemed so inappropriate for a beautiful widow of forty-seven. She never remarried and there is some evidence to suggest that George also made her promise not to should she fail to produce an heir.¹³²

¹²⁸*Times*, March 24, 1925; Mosley, 282, footnote 1.

¹²⁹*Ibid.*, July 23, 1925.

¹³⁰*Ibid.*, June 10, 1926; Memorandum by Viscount Scarsdale, May 24, 1971, in private hands.

¹³¹See *Times*, April 2, 1930; June 19, 1930; and June 26, 1930; Scarsdale also brought suit against Grace to force her to pay part of the renovation costs. She settled out of court, agreeing to contribute four thousand pounds (*Times*, March 9, 1928).

¹³²Asquith, 468. In an entry under August 28, 1918 Lady Cynthia wrote: "It is alleged that before marriage Lord Curzon had made Mrs. D [Duggan] sign an agreement promising not to marry again, as he couldn't bear the idea of a successor."

Once her period of mourning was over — nearly a year — she resumed entertaining on her usual scale. Whereas she gave no more official receptions for visiting dignitaries, she continued to entertain George's former colleagues and royal friends. In November 1926 she gave two large receptions, one of which was in aid of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre.¹³³ In May 1927 she hosted a reception for the Grand Habitation of the Primrose League, of which George had been president for many years.¹³⁴ In February 1928 she gave a large dinner party "to meet the Prime Minister."¹³⁵ One of her more unusual activities during this period was running an all-night canteen for non-striking truck drivers during the General Strike of 1926. It was an educational experience for her. "I seemed to spend the whole night frying sausages, and getting my hands burnt by the hot sputtering fat because the sausages were always exploding, until a kind lorry driver exclaimed in surprise, 'Prick them, Miss — prick them!' So I received my first lesson in cookery."¹³⁶

When Marcella came out in 1926, Grace spared no expense. Hackwood and Montescute were looted to supplement the special decorations. Her guests included the King and Queen of Spain, the Prince of Wales, and Winston Churchill, who had merely intended to pay a courtesy call. So taken was he by the festivities, that he hustled Clementine out of bed, and they joined the revelry. Grace wrote of it: "Seldom have I given an entertainment that gave me so much pleasure and satisfaction."¹³⁷

She found little satisfactory in Marcella's choice of a husband the following year: Edward Rice, an untitled solicitor of limited means and gentry background. Grace had hoped for someone grander. When faced with the prospect of an elopement she capitulated and put together the wedding of the season.¹³⁸ It was an advertisement of Grace's extraordinary

¹³³*Times*, October 9, 1926; the other social was a dinner-dance for Marcella on November 22, 1926 (*Times*).

¹³⁴*Times*, May 6, 1927.

¹³⁵*Ibid.*, February 3, 1928.

¹³⁶*Reminiscences*, 235.

¹³⁷*Ibid.*, 235-36.

¹³⁸Grace tried to break up the romance by confining Marcella to her room at Carlton House Terrace. That led to an elopement attempt. When questioned by the press, Grace asserted that the elopement rumor was "absolutely beneath contempt,

organizing skills and determination to stage a brilliant event. Appropriately enough her escort was a former prime minister, A. J. Balfour, now an earl, who more than anyone else was responsible for thwarting George's prime ministerial aspirations. The service was at St. Margaret's with Sir Thomas Beecham and the London Symphony Orchestra providing the music. The guests included Princess Alice representing the royal family, the King and Queen of Portugal, and Prince Paul of Serbia. A sumptuous reception followed at Carlton House Terrace. Grace's verdict on the festivities was not unlike those of most mothers, but one suspects there was a large element of truth in her conclusion that it was "one of the most beautiful [weddings] I have ever seen."¹³⁹ Although the marriage ended in divorce, it did produce grandchildren for Grace, and Rice saw to it that Marcella's inheritance was transformed into safe investments before the Depression.¹⁴⁰

Presumably Grace was no more satisfied with Hubert's choice of a wife the following year: Joan Dunn, the daughter of Sir James Dunn, Bt., a Canadian banker. While the ceremony was held at the fashionable St. George's Church, Hanover Square, where Teddy Roosevelt had been married, it had none of the brilliance of Marcella's. Still, it said something about Grace's status that several of her aristocratic friends came, including Margot Asquith, who had also been married in that church.¹⁴¹ The marriage lasted only two years. No doubt, Grace resented Alfred's wanderlust attitude which prevented him from attending either Marcella's or Hubert's wedding and his disinclination at this point to wed.¹⁴² None of her children inherited her talent for making and keeping brilliant marriages.

beneath notice" (New York *Times*, March 13, 1927). Bowing to the inevitable, however, she agreed to a wedding announcement being made two months later (New York *Times*, May 19, 1927).

¹³⁹*Reminiscences*, 238-39; *Times*, May 19, 1927.

¹⁴⁰Memorandum by Viscount Scarsdale, *op. cit.*

¹⁴¹*Times*, June 27, 1928.

¹⁴²Of Alfred, Grace wrote "Alfred preferred bachelor parties; the friends he liked to have at Hackwood were Robert Byron, Gavin Henderson (now Lord Faringdon), and Evelyn Waugh; one or two of my women friends would make up the party. Alfred loved traveling, especially in eastern Europe" (234). This passage from *Reminiscences* caused Waugh to scream of "Lady Curzon's untruthful memoirs. . . . She plainly accused Alfred and me of buggery" (Mark Amory [ed.], *The Letters of Evelyn Waugh*. [New Haven, 1980], 521). Hereafter cited as *The Letters of Evelyn Waugh*.

One of her last major soirees occurred sometime after Marcella's wedding. Interestingly enough, it had its origins in Grace's Alabama background. She gave a fancy dress ball at which Hubert's friends appeared in Ku Klux Klan robes and kidnapped the popular wife of the Spanish Ambassador, Dona Maria Merry del Val. After receiving her guests as an Egyptian, Grace slipped upstairs where a makeup expert transformed her into a bald "Negro Parson." She spent the rest of the evening dancing with her guests, only one of whom recognized her. "It was an amusing and odd experience to find myself for once in the position of an invisible hostess."¹⁴³

In the twilight of the 1920s Grace occupied herself with three other pursuits. She took much greater interest in horse-racing than before, migrating after the London season from one racing event to another. In the early 1920s she had bought her first horse from the Duke of Portland. At its first race at Ascot, it beat the King's horse in the final lap. At the time she was standing next to an amazed George V. When the King exclaimed, "What's this horse coming up and over-hauling the rest," she proudly replied, "It's my horse, Sir."¹⁴⁴ From then on her interests grew to the point that she had her own stable and trainers. She took it seriously enough to be able to discuss contemporary prices with such successful turfmen as Lord D'Abernon, as the latter noted in his diary in 1924.¹⁴⁵ Although George took little interest in the sport, he was pleased that she had rejuvenated the family's racing colors, brown and pink, and made them a frequent sight on the fashionable racing circuits.¹⁴⁶ Her greatest success occurred in 1928, when she won the Cesarewitch with Arctic Star.¹⁴⁷

The most humorous experience associated with Grace's racing period occurred off the track in 1929. One of her houseguests for Goodwood, the portly and venerable Earl of Derby — another of George's old enemies — discovered a black baby in the bath his valet had prepared for him. The image

¹⁴³*Reminiscences*, 239-40.

¹⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 147-48.

¹⁴⁵Viscount D'Abernon's Diary, entry dated October 7, 1924. D'Abernon Papers, ADD 48960, Manuscript Room, British Museum, London.

¹⁴⁶*Reminiscences*, 147.

¹⁴⁷*New York Times*, August 14, 1931.

of a crochety, bed-robed Derby making such a discovery provided much mirth at the dinner rounds of Goodwood that season.¹⁴⁸ It was stories like this, instead of the scandalous ones associated with Lady Cunard or the rude quips of Lady Astor which continued to endear Grace to her aristocratic English friends.

Another activity during this period concerned Hackwood, where not only did she have the golf course redesigned but a new shoot organized. From 1928 until 1930 her name appeared periodically in the Court Circulars as the hostess of weekend shooting parties, a new departure for her.¹⁴⁹

Hubert's desire to enter politics provided her with a third interest. In 1929 he ran as a Conservative in the solidly work-class neighborhood of East Ham. With his marriage moving toward annulment, Grace substituted as his hostess. She arrived in the borough with her French maid, her chauffeur driven Rolls-Royce — from which she campaigned — and hampers of food from Fortnum and Mason's. She enjoyed the experience until one evening when a laborer, offended by her ostentatious display of wealth, badly twisted the arm she had extended from the back seat of the Rolls. Not surprisingly, Hubert lost. He did succeed, with Grace's help, in getting elected two years later from a less solidly working class neighborhood.¹⁵⁰

The twilight of the 1920s was probably the happiest period of Grace's life. Her health was good; she was free to do as she pleased — her children were grown and grandchildren were on the way; she had abundant money and three beautiful homes in which to entertain. She was also a respected and established society member whose good friends included the kings and queens of England, Belgium, Spain, and Portugal, the prominent members of the peerage and the Conservative party. What could seem more natural than for an admirer, a Roths-

¹⁴⁸*Reminiscences*, 240. The baby belonged to one of the servants. Of this episode Grace wrote "I have never been able to solve the mystery of why she had chosen to place her baby in Lord Derby's bath."

¹⁴⁹Her shooting guests included the best shots in England. Her favorite was Harry Stonor "who was a pleasure to watch, I would choose to stand by him as often as possible" (*Reminiscences*, 233).

¹⁵⁰*Ibid.*, 240-41.

child, to leave her part of his fabulous art collection in 1928.¹⁵¹ She seemed lucky as well. While at Goodwood in 1929 a burglar broke into the house, but he was discovered before any of her jewels or silver were lost.¹⁵²

Grace's extraordinary luck ran out in 1929. The Depression proved for her, as for the Bellamys of Eaton Square, a financial Waterloo. Having spent the bulk of what George had left her, she was largely dependent on the revenues from Argentina she inherited from Alfred to maintain her grand life style. As Argentina's economy slowly contracted from the collapse of world trade, the peso plummeted. Grace's estates were selling less produce and the pesos, when converted, generated fewer pounds sterling. To make matters worse for her the Argentinean government responded to the economic crisis by instituting an income tax.¹⁵³

There was one small consolation. The crash was delayed long enough to give one last grand reception. That was on the occasion of the unveiling of a statue of George outside Carlton House Terrace that had been funded by public subscription. When the Prime Minister, again Baldwin, showed up without a speech, she promptly informed him, "But of course, Prime Minister, I do expect a speech." She then showed him into a room where he drafted one.¹⁵⁴ Like most widows of great men, she regarded it as her duty to safeguard the memory of her famous husband.

The unveiling of George's statue occurred in March 1931. Shortly thereafter, the Argentinean government froze the convertibility of the peso into pounds.¹⁵⁵ Grace suddenly was faced with little income and numerous creditors in England demanding payment. It was a sobering experience for someone for whom money had always been abundant to face financial insecurity at fifty-three. She seems not to have bemoaned her fate. Instead, she set about putting her affairs

¹⁵¹She received several Old Masters from the estate of a long-time admirer, Baron Alfred de Rothschild (*Times*, March 10, 1932).

¹⁵²*Times*, July 5, 1929.

¹⁵³Arthur Whitaker, *Argentina*. (New Jersey, 1964), 93.

¹⁵⁴*Reminiscences*, 242.

¹⁵⁵Alberto Paz and Gustavo Ferrari, *Argentina's Foreign Policy, 1930-1962*. (Notre Dame, 1966), 9.

in order and selling what she could: her stables, antiques, the pictures from Carlton House Terrace— among which were a set of eighteenth century mezzo-tints that George had bought as a student at Oxford and had remained among his most prized possessions.¹⁵⁶ She tried to dispose of Carlton House Terrace on grounds, according to the *Times*' announcement, that she now found it "too large."¹⁵⁷ She also put Hackwood up for rent.¹⁵⁸

In the midst of the Depression, when so many others were doing the same thing, she initially found no takers for her homes and according to her *Who's Who* entry, remained at Carlton House Terrace and Montescute until 1937. The lease to Hackwood was sold in 1934. Among her last guests were Queen Mary and the Duchess of York.¹⁵⁹ Harold Nicolson, who visited her in January of that year, recorded a bleak description of what he found: "The hall, which in Curzon's day I remember bright with candelabra and tapestry, is lit by a single lamp. A bad butler; half the rooms shut up."¹⁶⁰ Through the sale of her possessions she was able to satisfy her creditors at least, according to an article which appeared in the *New York Times* in August 1931.¹⁶¹ She was spared a similar announcement in the *Times*.

In 1933 the Argentineans agreed to make the peso convertible under certain limited conditions,¹⁶² which offered hope for an improvement in her finances. In that year she returned to Argentina, where she was seen at the Colon Opera by Hudson Strode. Despite her trying times, she was still beautiful and according to him had "a smile that captured your heart on the instant." Although she was now nearly sixty, she seemed to him about thirty-nine.¹⁶³ While in Buenos Aires she received a Jubilee medal from George V who had not forgotten his horse racing friend, and who had made special ar-

¹⁵⁶*Times*, March 10, 1932.

¹⁵⁷*Ibid.*, June 5, 1931.

¹⁵⁸*Ibid.*, February 20, 1933. The rent was £100 guineas a week.

¹⁵⁹*Reminiscences*, 159-60.

¹⁶⁰Stanley Olson (ed.), *Harold Nicolson, Diaries and Letters, 1930-1964*. (New York, 1980), 59. Hereafter cited as *Harold Nicolson, Diaries and Letters*.

¹⁶¹*New York Times*, August 14, 1931.

¹⁶²Paz and Ferrari, 11-12.

¹⁶³Strode, 240-41.

rangements for her to receive it on the correct date.¹⁶⁴ Although the outcome of the trip is not clear, whatever improvements in her finances — if any — would only have lasted to the outbreak of war. The trip was not without its pleasures. Alfred, who was now playing an increasingly important role in her life, accompanied her. Although she was not accorded the grand reception of 1923, she was treated to a week's excursion on a private train to see the dawn come up over the Mar Chiquita. "As the sun came up great troops of flamingoes rose on the wing, until it seemed that the glow of sunrise was being repeated in every quarter of the sky."¹⁶⁵ It was her last visit to Argentina. Presumably, she could have lived well there had she been willing to settle permanently. She was not. This woman of the world had finally settled on England as home.

By 1937 Grace's London period was over. She had disposed of all her great homes and much of her treasure. She retired to the country, eventually settling in a house on the Bodiam Castle Estate George had bequeathed to the National Trust. He had retained residency rights to the Manor House for his sister and her children, little imagining it would be a refuge some day for his then wealthy wife.¹⁶⁶ The house itself Grace described as "a pleasant, sunny house of no particular style or architectural merit."¹⁶⁷ She furnished her new house, now a school, "sumptuously" according to the novelist Evelyn Waugh (an old friend of Alfred and Hubert from their days at Oxford) with what was left from Carlton House Terrace, Hackwood, and Montescute.¹⁶⁸ If she no longer had one of the choicest addresses in London as home, she did have one of the finest views from her bedroom: that of England's most beautiful moated castle. She also had Alfred's company, though with his drinking habits that might not always have been pleasant. Besides developing an interest in cultivating roses, she continued to entertain some old friends from London, and

¹⁶⁴ *Reminiscences*, 117.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 235.

¹⁶⁶ *Times*, July 23, 1925.

¹⁶⁷ *Reminiscences*, 159.

¹⁶⁸ Michael Davie (ed.), *The Diaries of Evelyn Waugh*. (London, 1976), 715-16. Hereafter cited as *The Diaries of Evelyn Waugh*.

in the process learned to cook.¹⁶⁹

While no longer an active member of society, her name continued to appear periodically in the Court Circular, a privilege of her rank and title. No longer are the entries about her entertainments, but as years passed largely about health problems. Initially, she lived modestly in order to afford an occasional reappearance at the London or racing seasons. As she explained to a luncheon guest, "Then my maid comes back from retirement in Harrogate, my old chauffeur takes the sign off my ex-Rolls and we live as we used to."¹⁷⁰ Even these costs eventually proved prohibitive and she ceased to be seen. On one occasion after the war she ran into the King of Spain, now in exile, who exclaimed that he had not seen her in ages. Grace replied, "Well, Sir, since I lost my fortune I have lived very quietly and seen nobody." He admonished her for such a severe response. "But that's nonsense — I lost my fortune too, but I still go about and see my friends and enjoy myself."¹⁷¹ Whether from pride or the feeling that she was now again an outsider or for purely financial ones, she ignored his advice.

The war brought trying times to her as it did for everyone else. At the beginning Alfred and Hubert, both in their mid-thirties, enlisted. Service in the ranks did not improve Alfred's drinking habits. Just before Christmas he got leave and suggested that Grace join him for dinner at the Dorchester. According to Waugh: "She came up to London, got some jewels out of pawn, bought seats at a theatre determined to do Alfred proud and sat from 8 until midnight waiting for him. At 4:30 she was awoken 'Will Lady Curzon come at once to the Slip-in [an entrance way] bringing £4.2 and remove Mr. Duggan.'¹⁷² That nightmare ended without a personal disaster. The next one did not. In 1943 Hubert became deathly ill. Grace remained by his side to the end. Waugh who was also there induced Grace to agree to let a

¹⁶⁹Where Grace lived immediately after her crash is not clear. According to Lord Scarsdale "she moved to the small house of Bodiam Manor" (Memorandum by Viscount Scarsdale, *op. cit.*), but according to *Reminiscences* (159), she did not arrive there until 1944. Her entries in *Who's Who* ceased to list any address from 1937 until 1948, excepting 1940-1942 when she was at her mother's in London, 4 West Eaton Place.

¹⁷⁰David Herbert, *Second Son*. (London, 1973), 72-73.

¹⁷¹*Reminiscences*, 136.

¹⁷²*Letters of Evelyn Waugh*, 131-32.

priest administer absolution to Hubert, a non-practicing Catholic. The ebbing of Hubert's life provided Waugh with one of his famous death scenes, that of Lord Marchmain in *Brideshead Revisited*.¹⁷³ Perhaps indicative of respect for her rank, the Argentinean and Brazilian ambassadors attended the funeral.¹⁷⁴ Another tragedy was the loss of her mother, then in her nineties, who had played such an important role in her life and was the one link she still had with her childhood in Alabama. She spent part of the war at her mother's house in Mayfair doing some war work, most notably helping to organize blood donations.¹⁷⁵ She was spared the discomforts of being bombed out of her home as were many of her old friends, Chips Channon and Lady Cunard included.

The post-war years found her comfortably settled at Bodiam. Her health held until 1953 and old age still had some pleasant surprises. Whereas Marcella had not married into the aristocracy, her granddaughter, Caroline, did; becoming the wife of the Earl of Plymouth in October 1950.¹⁷⁶ Another marriage which brought great pleasure, but which left a void in her life was Alfred's in 1954. That he was turning into a major writer of historical novels also pleased her. She had two handsome Rice grandsons and, as of 1951, a great grandson, Viscount Windsor, and in 1954, a great granddaughter, Lady Emma Windsor Clive. The one jarring note was the breakup of Marcella's marriage.¹⁷⁷

Once the post-war shortages ended, she resumed her modest entertaining at Bodiam. Of one of her dinner parties in 1953 Waugh noted, "Good food, excellent wine. I have the impression of a genial evening."¹⁷⁸ Less successful was her effort the following year to help promote the sales of Alfred's books by giving a dinner party for his American publisher, to which Waugh was also invited. Of it he wrote: "All she asked were old ladies who talked of nothing but what had

¹⁷³Waugh's biographer, Christopher Sykes, included a lengthy description in *Evelyn Waugh* (Boston, 1975, 233-35) of Hubert's death and Waugh's efforts to have absolution administered. Grace favored the idea; Marcella strongly opposed.

¹⁷⁴*Times*, October 26, 1943 and November 4, 1943.

¹⁷⁵*The Letters of Evelyn Waugh*, 143.

¹⁷⁶*Times*, October 12, 1950.

¹⁷⁷Memorandum by Viscount Scarsdale, *op. cit.*

¹⁷⁸*The Diaries of Evelyn Waugh*, 715-16.

Queen Mary done with the vase they gave her at Christmas 1915 and the publisher would have preferred young tarts I think."¹⁷⁹

She was briefly in the news in 1952 when she unveiled a plaque at Bodiam Castle in memory of George's generous bequest to the nation. In his speech, Harold Nicolson pointed out that but for an accident of history George would have been prime minister.¹⁸⁰ No doubt, the reference to that day at Carlton House Terrace twenty-nine years ago, when the king's secretary had imparted such bad news, brought back memories of how close she had come to making 10 Downing Street one of her residences and possibly caused her to speculate on how different her fate might have been had George become prime minister.

Her last great project was the preparation of her memoirs. After George's death she had contemplated writing them then; King George advised her to wait twenty-five years. In the early thirties she toyed with writing a biography of George, to the consternation of Harold Nicolson, then composing his splendid *Curzon: The Last Phase*. He complained that "She is a most tiresome and inconsiderate woman."¹⁸¹ She evidently did not like Nicolson's biography for when the latter read parts of it to her, "I can see that she is hurt and furious. But she keeps her temper."¹⁸² As a result of the move to Bodiam, she postponed indefinitely her own biography, eventually turning instead to the composition of her *Reminiscences*. When published in 1955, the book consisted of two parts. The first, a narrative of her life, largely centered about her marriage to George; the other, a series of chapters in which she quoted at length from George's and her correspondence. Written while in her mid-seventies her memory served her well. The descriptive passages about her upbringing, life in South America, and her first marriage were the most readable parts of the book, the passages after George's death a bit muddled in parts. Much of the book reads, as one critic suggested, like "Life in Burke's Peerage"¹⁸³ — who her titled friends were, who came to din-

¹⁷⁹*The Letters of Evelyn Waugh*, 427.

¹⁸⁰*Times*, October 13, 1952.

¹⁸¹*Harold Nicolson, Diaries and Letters*, 57.

¹⁸²*Ibid.*, 60.

¹⁸³E. P. Monroe in *Saturday Review of Literature*, May 11, 1957, 23.

ner, etc. It contained a few mistakes. Not only did she make her Alabama background more glamorous than it was, but she also included a photograph of "Lord and Lady Curzon at Balliol College, Oxford" (described as one that "George especially liked") that was not even of Balliol. The serious weakness of her memoirs was that she totally misrepresented the true nature of her stormy relationship with George. According to the image presented, it was an idyllic marriage. Not until Leonard Mosley's critical biography of Curzon appeared in 1960, replete with lengthy quotes from those letters she had not included, was the image corrected. Grace did present a picture of a fun-loving and humorous George in private that offset somewhat his popular image of a pompous aristocrat. Above all her memoirs were a memorial to an age of luxury and privilege that the world wars and the Depression had vanquished.

For an author's first work the book received kind reviews in the British press. The *Times Literary Supplement* called it "remarkable," observing "What a superb team they must have made — he, the proud, imposing, Augustan pro-consul, she a shimmering Tiepolo goddess."¹⁸⁴ The *Times* itself praised the book's "charm," adding that "they will certainly be drawn on with gratitude by any future biographer of Curzon."¹⁸⁵ American reviews were more restrained. *Newsweek* did note that "only a handful of living persons could have written anything like it."¹⁸⁶ The *Saturday Review of Literature* merely commented that *Reminiscences* was like reading a combination of "Burke's Peerage and the Almanach de Gotha";¹⁸⁷ it did recognize the merit of those parts dealing with George. No review appears to have been printed in any Alabama paper though the existence of the book helped inspire a lengthy article in the *Decatur Daily* in 1964¹⁸⁸ and one in the *Huntsville Times* in 1977.¹⁸⁹ The book certainly did not sell well in Alabama and only one major public library, Birmingham, bought a copy.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁴*The Times Literary Supplement*, December 9, 1955, 758.

¹⁸⁵*Times*, November 24, 1955.

¹⁸⁶*Newsweek*, April 1, 1957, 110-11.

¹⁸⁷*Saturday Review of Literature*, May 11, 1957, 23.

¹⁸⁸*Decatur Daily*, December 9, 1964.

¹⁸⁹*Huntsville Times*, June 19, 1977.

¹⁹⁰The Huntsville Public Library has had since 1977 a copy, donated by Leon Hinds. In 1981 The Wheeler Basin Regional Library (Decatur) received one, donated by Julia Leigh Crawford.

Grace's final years saw a further reduction in the scale of her life style. In 1954 after Alfred left Bodiam, burglars robbed her. Badly shaken by the experience, she decided to relinquish the manor on grounds that "it was too isolated a house in which to live alone."¹⁹¹ In *Reminiscences* she said nothing about her final home in Tilmanstone in Kent, where she completed her autobiography.¹⁹² Her health had been failing since 1953, when she underwent an operation. She was ill twice in 1954 contracting pneumonia on one occasion and had to enter a nursing home.¹⁹³ In January 1956 she made her last appearance in the Court Circular: "Marchioness Curzon of Kedleston is at present in a nursing home at Eastbourne and will be unable to answer letters for two or three weeks."¹⁹⁴ A distant relative, only fifteen at the time, recalls seeing Grace at this point, in bed with thinning red hair. She left with pleasant memories of the meeting.¹⁹⁵ Harold Nicolson also recorded an image of Grace in her twilight: "Even when an invalid on the verge of 80 she retained the glamour of her poise. Her loveliness and smile never lost their girlish quality which softened her stateliness."¹⁹⁶ She died on June 29, 1958.

In her obituary in the *Times* she was praised for being a woman "of elegance and great beauty," who conquered English high society, brought George much happiness, and made his home "once more a centre of brilliant social life; it also became the scene of fateful and historic gatherings."¹⁹⁷ Harold Nicolson wrote to the *Times* that "although she became noted as a lavish hostess she never conveyed an impression of social ambition or even eagerness." "She accepted glory with modesty, delight, and simple surprise."¹⁹⁸ The *New York Times* also printed a lengthy obituary noting that "the luxurious and well-bred world in which she moved with much distinction found her handsome and gracious."¹⁹⁹ She was only the second Alabama-born female to have had obituaries in both the

¹⁹¹*Reminiscences*, 159.

¹⁹²Hesketh Person, *The Marrying Americans*. (New York, 1961), 127.

¹⁹³*Times*, July 27, 1954.

¹⁹⁴January 10, 1956.

¹⁹⁵Telephone interview with Joanna Merrett nee Paterson (Richardson, Texas), August 22, 1981.

¹⁹⁶*Times*, July 1, 1958.

¹⁹⁷*Ibid.*

¹⁹⁸*Ibid.*, July 2, 1958.

¹⁹⁹*New York Times*, July 1, 1958.

Times and the New York *Times*.²⁰⁰ Her hometown newspaper, the Decatur *Daily*, printed none, however.

In death, as so often in life, she balked George. While placing flowers on his coffin in the Curzon vault at Kedleston she found a note in his hand on a nearby shelf, which read "Reserved for the second Lady Curzon."²⁰¹ She was not amused. On still another visit the lights went out, plunging the vault into total darkness; she scrambled out, looking very white.²⁰² As Mary Leiter's coffin already had the prominent position next to George's, she decided not to be buried in the vault. She arranged with Lord Scarsdale to be interred in the adjacent churchyard in clear view of the sun.²⁰³ No doubt her desire to escape the darkness of the family vault was perhaps also caused by her fear of death and possible memories of the brilliant, white sun of her Alabama youth. The funeral, attended only by members of her family, was held July 7th.²⁰⁴

A memorial service in London followed on July 17th at St. Peter's in Eaton Square, near where she had first lived with Alfred when they moved to London in 1907. The large turnout, nearly half of whom bore titles, suggests that her lavish hospitality of yesteryear had not been forgotten.²⁰⁵ The guests included, appropriately enough, Nancy Astor, whose successful life in England had been launched at the same Court presentation as Grace's in 1907 and who was the only great American hostess in London to sail financially unimpaired through the post-war world. As revealed in her will, Grace's own resources had been reduced from the millions of pounds she had originally inherited from Alfred to a mere £10,570, the death taxes on which, £215, were probably about what she spent on cocktails at one of her grand receptions in the 1920s.²⁰⁶

To the end, Grace Hinds remained an outsider. She never

²⁰⁰Consuelo Vanderbilt's mother, Alva Smith, was the first. The Southern novelist, Augusta Evans Wilson, also had obituaries in both but she was not born in Alabama.

²⁰¹Rose, 13.

²⁰²*Reminiscences*, 156.

²⁰³Memorandum by Viscount Scarsdale, *op. cit.*

²⁰⁴*Times*, July 8, 1958.

²⁰⁵*Ibid.*, July 7, 1958.

²⁰⁶*Ibid.*, June 3, 1959.

belonged in Decatur or even the country of her father, the United States. She chose not to stay in Argentina, the country of her mother. She opted to make England her home and the place where she would prove that she was an extraordinary person. Owing to her peculiar economic base, she did not become a permanent fixture in British society. Nevertheless in her day she was an active participant and contributor to the spectacular and luxurious twilight of Europe's aristocracy. The Depression ended her role in it, and like the adventurer she was, she folded up her tent, so to speak, and with apparently no self-recrimination at her turn of fortunes, stole away. She lived long enough to witness the end of that world and the demise of many in it. At the end she recognized that she had never won George's affections the way Mary Leiter had and chose not to be buried with him in the Curzon vault. By any standards, her journey from the red clay banks of the Tennessee River to the cemetery in one of England's most beautiful estates, was an extraordinary one, and one not likely to be repeated. The *Times* review of *Reminiscences* provided her epitaph when it suggested that "Lady Curzon came, saw, and conquered English high society as one of those lovely Americans who has zestfully thrown in their lot with our ruling classes."²⁰⁷ In doing so she added an interesting chapter to the heritage of Alabama.

The author wishes to express his appreciation to the following for their help in the preparation of this article: Caroline, Countess of Plymouth; the dowager Viscountess Scarsdale; Joanne Merrett; the late Kathleen McEntire; Ann and W. H. Tankersley; Majorie Pointer Garner; Clara Berry Sanders; Sandy Herman; Laurie Freeman; Eulalia Weldon; Imogene Barns; Drs. Mildred Caudle, Sarah Wiggins, William Barnard, Ray Fowler, Omar Baker, and Lynne Mueller; Joyce Lamont; Viola Ayer; Larry Harbin; Ruth Kibbey; and Craig Claiborne of the New York *Times*.

²⁰⁷*Ibid.*, November 24, 1955.

BOOK REVIEW

Southern Businessmen and Desegregation. Edited by Elizabeth Jacoway and David R. Colburn. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982. x, 324 pp. \$27.50.

In recent years university presses have turned increasingly to the publication of collections of essays by young scholars writing on topics of current popularity. Rarely do these essays present information that is new or ideas that are stimulating. *Southern Businessmen and Desegregation* is no exception to the present trend. Edited by Elizabeth Jacoway and David R. Colburn, the book consists of fourteen essays related in one way or another to desegregation in different southern cities during the 1950's and 1960's. Some are concerned with desegregation of the public schools; some with the desegregation of public facilities; some with equal employment opportunities. Only a few emphasize the role played by southern business leaders in the various aspects of desegregation.

In her introduction Jacoway attempts to develop a thesis for the collection, concluding that while southern businessmen had a strong desire to maintain racial separation in their communities they also wished to project a progressive business image. Thus, under the pressure of the Civil Rights Movement, while not abandoning racism, "they did choose, for the first time, to place other considerations above the maintenance of white supremacy." While several of the essays, including her own on Little Rock, do support this thesis, the majority do not. For example, the authors of the essays relating to New Orleans, Jackson, and St. Augustine suggest that if any role was played by businessmen in desegregation, it was a negative one, seeking to block desegregation for as long as

possible. Writing about Greensboro, William Chafe questioned whether a truly desegregated society had been established there. He suggested that the victories of the blacks fell far short and did little more than "reflect paternalism [by the whites] raised to a new level of shrewdness and sophistication."

The essays vary greatly in their approach to the question — dealing with desegregation of public schools, with desegregation of public facilities, and sometimes both. They also vary considerably in the quality of research and presentation of information and conclusions. Generally, the research is limited, with many of the authors relying almost entirely on a few newspapers and interviews with supporters of the Civil Rights Movement. Some of the evidence presented is of questionable validity. For example, David Colburn in his essay on St. Augustine presents the opinions of anonymous individuals as fact; he even resorts to the use of hearsay obtained from interviews with anonymous persons. Several authors show only a marginal relationship between the desegregation of a community and the businessmen there. Instead greater emphasis is placed upon the roles of Civil Rights activists and local politicians.

Robert Corley's account of desegregation in Birmingham is a pleasing exception to the mediocrity of the other essays. Writing with less emotion and far more balance than the others, Corley concentrates primarily on the efforts to desegregate the public facilities of that city. His story culminates with the 1963 election of a moderate city government to replace the intransigent segregationist one which had been in power. Corley relates the roles played by several groups of businessmen as well as the roles played by some individual business leaders. To his credit he makes use of a variety of letters, documents, and newspapers and, unlike the other authors, even refers to several segregationist publications.

Though he writes well, Corley also slips into a few errors. While concluding in one sentence that the white businessmen had made "compromise proposals" regarding black employment and desegregation of downtown facilities, he contradicts himself two sentences later by stating that "they still refuse to grant any concessions." Corley also commits several er-

rors of omission. While writing of black leadership in Birmingham, he never explains who made up that leadership nor does he discuss the different views that existed among various black groups in the city. While describing the demonstrations that were initiated by Martin Luther King in April, 1963, he fails to explain why King began those demonstrations during the crucial interregnum immediately *after* a more moderate and conciliatory government had been elected to office but *before* it had taken over the actual operation of the city. Instead of explaining the reasons for King's actions, Corley draws an erroneous conclusion not supported by any of his evidence that "King's demonstrations . . . provided the catalyst for both change [in the racial policies] and the restoration of [racial] harmony." From the evidence Corley presented, one could more easily reach the opposite conclusion — that King exacerbated racial feelings, intensified violence, and made the newly elected city government's task of reconciling the races far more difficult.

Probably a sound analysis of the desegregation of southern cities will have to wait for more time to pass. Those who lived through those days as participants and those who received their graduate training during the emotional turmoil of the late 1960's and early 1970's are apparently unable to approach the subject with any real sense of balance. Sadly, most of the authors of the essays in this book are still waging a mushy and emotional crusade from their earlier years; they are not yet writing clear, crisp, objective history.

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Cotton Fields And Skyscrapers: Southern City and Region, 1607-1980. By David R. Goldfield. Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1982. \$20.00.

David Goldfield fails to make valid points and attempts to support unwarranted assumptions in his book *Cotton Fields and Skyscrapers: Southern City and Region, 1607-1980*. He

displays a unique ability to look at an elephant and see a camel.

His basic assumption is that northern cities are the standard: southern cities are deficient because they do not fit patterns established by their northern counterparts. The reasons given, redundantly, throughout the book to prove southern cities are uniquely different from cities in other areas of the country are, biracialism, colonial economy, rural values of family, and religion. Yet, Dr. Goldfield fails to show that cities in other sections of the United States are significantly different except in the area of colonial economy. The reader frequently finds himself wondering why southern cities can't be like their beautiful northern sisters.

The book is written without footnotes, which becomes a serious defect when license is used to the extent that Dr. Goldfield uses it. For example, he says, "In 1895, the *Atlantic Monthly* summarized urbanization in the New South era: 'In the Southern states the rate of urban growth is not very rapid. The people are still predominantly agricultural.'" The author comments, "And, the magazine might have added, so were the cities." If the magazine wanted to add such they would have done so. Also, in an attempt to explain lynching in the southern city, he makes these assumptions, "Although cities in the South were less likely to indulge in the regional lynching hysteria that grew during the 1890s, it is possible that the malleable urban press suppressed stories about such occurrences. . . . There was sufficient violence in the southern city to suggest that lynching was more prevalent than the statistics show." This irresponsible journalism falls far short of scholastic research. The author has a politician's ability to quote statistics to support his hypothesis that an elephant is really a camel.

Other blatant errors condemn the reliability of Dr. Goldfield's research. Let me quote, "When Martin Luther King, Jr., and his black and white followers marched across Pettus Bridge into Selma and into the troops and dogs of Police Chief Jim Clarke, an era was drawing to a close." Two blunders in one sentence. Martin Luther King marched across Edmund Winston Pettus Bridge *out* of Selma and Jim Clarke had never been Police Chief; he was Sheriff of Dallas County. His most sorely needed footnote places Bull Connor holding hands with blacks and singing "We Shall Overcome."

Dr. Goldfield's bias, utter dislike and contempt for the South, and anything of the southern tradition, is demonstrated in his phraseology "sun belt sophistry," "economic second fiddlers," "parsimonious social conscience," and "While the white community sought to destroy and confine, the black community strove to build and expand."; ". . . the white elite covertly worked to enforce the status quo," "the civilization of the South was . . . undergirded by law that, in its deepest meaning — dehumanization of Negroes — was based on murder, based on the antithesis of the meaning of law and civilization," "The narrowed southern mind. . . ."

Dr. Goldfield's enthusiasm to determine superlatives never makes clear who lives in "the most decrepit area" of southern cities. It may have been Blacks, Italians, or Mexicans.

The omission of the Fourteenth Amendment and its consequence on southern post war economy causes me to suspect bias or extremely poor research. Very little is said of the Reconstruction period as a political and economic influence of lasting significance. Its commonly recognized that economic colonialism is re-established, but Goldfield does not clearly show the process. He makes only a brief statement of Pittsburg Plus and its influence which, though inadequate, must suffice.

Dr. Goldfield sinks in the quagmire of the biracial society by trying to explain the white southerner's responsibility for the absence of black contribution to the southern city in terms of "stifled creative energies," "the waste of human capital and so much of it," the suppression of "vast potential of human energy," and "the rich black resources." However, the only example given to prove this essential and basic point was a traditionally white high school band "performing a little dance step popularized by a southern black university band." The author would have presented a much more believable case had he developed this "rich black resource," and explained, at least to some extent, why this potential has not been capitalized on at least by some progressive northern city.

The book lacks proper and sufficient research. It seems to be a spinoff from some undeveloped projects by the author. For the serious student of southern cities it seems unlikely this book will be found creditable: like too much of our media

this book is steeped in emotion. It falls far short of being adequate.

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One South: An Ethnic Approach to Regional Culture. By John Shelton Reed. Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1982. xiv, 200 pp. \$22.50 (cloth), \$5.95 (paper).

John Shelton Reed's *One South: An Ethnic Approach to Regional Culture* is a collection of essays centering on the South's identity and cultural distinctiveness. He finds Southerners akin to an ethnic group typified by shared cultural values, a heritage of violence, country music and humor. The author also accounts for the rise of a new Southern middle class. His analyses are designed to point out that the South is anywhere Southerners can be found, not a fixed geographic region, and to promote further sociological investigations in regional studies.

Twelve of the thirteen chapters of this work have been published previously. Reed, author of *The Enduring South*, believes the South remains as much a sociological phenomenon as a geographical one, and that it is "still a cultural and cognitive reality of considerable, and . . . increasing, importance." He pays scant attention to variation within the South or to conflicts among Southern constituent groups, all the while seeking the South as a whole. He asserts the "triumph of history over the centrifugal forces of geography and economics." Believing that the study of regional groups contributes to broader theoretical concerns in the social sciences, the author hopes that the South will survive "Urbanization and industrialization in better shape than the Northeast" because his faith is fervent that the South is "a superior place to live."

Reed insists that the South is where Southerners come from. The four sections of *One South* examine the sociologi-

cal impact of Southern studies on mainstream regional studies, the history of sociological investigations of the South, the appearance of the new middle class of Southerners, and the question of group identity. He suggests that regional identification is strongest among Southerners from the conventionally defined Deep South, and that differences between white Southerners and other white Americans are "far from negligible" due in part to ethnic and religious conformity, external threat, and mythology. Southern regional culture and local institutionalism make the South the "most distinctive of America's regional variants."

Reed assails the advocates of Howard Odum's regional sociology for "politically induced distortion of its activities" and the "almost single-minded attention to regional differences in wealth, occupational structure, and standard of living" to the disregard of regional identity or regional consciousness. Thus, he argues that the discipline failed to produce a third generation. Yet, he applauds the renewal of sociological interest in regions of the United States, partly because substantial regional differences are not decreasing and therefore must be addressed and investigated. The author holds that in the comparative study of regional social systems, contributions by regionalists will be most enduring. Though he sees the South as "the most peculiar and self-conscious" region of America, Reed calls for attention by regional sociologists to be paid to other regions because he fears the influence of localism and sectionalism which would result from attention only to the South. Furthermore, Reed's "contributions to sociology" aim at resuscitation of the "moribund field of regional sociology."

In the second section an attempt is made to find out why the South has produced so few outstanding sociologists, an effort based upon Reed's impressions, speculations and hunches. His investigation commences with a short history of sociology in the South, moves on to explain why the discipline has not fared well in the South — basically arguing that sociologists tend to examine things most Southerners don't care to have examined and that the sociological way of thinking (as a *generalizing* discipline) fails to come as easily to well-acclimated Southerners as to other Americans. Southerners like

to particularize and avoid categorical thinking by allowing for numerous exceptions and putting theories into practice as seldom as possible, or by not following through with them. This way of viewing things, according to Reed, is good for the discipline in order to bring about divisions of labor, "to tell sociological stories about particular people, particular groups, particular societies."

While considering white Southerners as an ethnic group, Reed, using factor analysis, notes that for the American South "regional identity, regional culture, and regional social pathology — all define essentially the same region." Southern "peoplehood" is demonstrated by many Southerners' accepting greater localism as the alternative to thinking in regional terms; high Southern identification follows the area of cotton cultivation and dense black population. The positive association of segregationist views and Southern identification, and the study of white Southerners may contribute to theories on ethnicity.

Stressing an earlier assumption by maintaining that many questions about ethnic group relations also apply in the context of American sectional relations, specifically that cultural differences between white Southerners and other white Americans are large, as group differences go in America, Reed uses the Contact (Stereotyping) Hypothesis to prove his point.

Section Three contains three reedited articles on Jewish Southerners, blacks and Southerners, and the South's new middle class. In the first article Reed uses secondary analysis of national sample surveys to study some aspects of the acculturation of Southern Jews, specifically demographic characteristics, political behavior and participation in organized religious life. His point is to encourage primary analysis of the subject with emphasis on ethnic group research in a comparative regional framework. His study of blacks' attitudes toward the South suggests that blacks, too, are laying claim to the label *Southerner*; however, white Southerners have changed their feelings far less than black Southerners. Thus, the word "Southerner" still basically refers to the region's dominant racial group. In trying to make the Southern upper middle class visible Reed suggests that a good starting point is an examination of *South-*

ern Living magazine because it serves as a "How-to-do-it manual" of the Southern good life; that is, it describes how to remain regional creatures in an upper middle class orientation. The South's new upper middle class, accordingly, is "intensely conscious of the place and role of their society, its economy, and its culture, in the larger world."

While discussing "The South Today," the author reiterates some of his key points: that the South and Southerners are still different from other Americans — "there seems to be something Southern about Southerners that causes them to behave in a Southern manner"; that Southern culture may help domesticated and assimilate industrialism and urbanization via religiousity and endearment to local communities; that the South displays a culture of violence because there are things worth fighting *for*; that Southerners like where they are better than any other Americans, save possibly Californians, because there are things that almost everybody wants and that Southerners have more of, namely, safe warm places and pleasant personal relations; and, that Southernness provides a substrata beneath the overlay of functional and utilitarian relationships imposed by a modern industrial economy promoted by individualism and "a nested set of communities," a way of trying to deal with how to reconcile "liberty, equality, and fraternity" in a modern context. All of these are Southern understandings in an American context, *entitled* to be set off from the rest.

Reed concludes simply by stating that the South has always been an interesting place. It is surviving without becoming boring. The author raises many important questions deserving legitimate explanations. The work is worthy of due consideration, and in some places it is "down right" amusing.

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The Only Land They Knew: Tragic Story of the American Indians in the Old South. By J. Leitch Wright, Jr. New York: Free Press, 1981. Preface and acknowledgements; maps; illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Pp. xi + 372; cloth; \$16.95.

This book is not a traditional history of the Indians of the Old South because Wright examines native-American-white relations from a different perspective. Focusing primarily on the era from the discovery period to the American Revolution, he does not confine his work to English-Indian confrontations. He devotes a significant portion of the book to Spanish-Native American encounters. Wright laments that often modern readers assume, if Spanish contributions in Florida are noted at all, that Florida means land encompassed within the boundary of the present state of Florida. In this book greater Florida includes early white-Indian relations in sixteenth century Georgia, Virginia, Alabama and Mississippi.

The major portion of the book is about the English experience of European-Indian confrontation. Here Wright attacks common assumptions that in many areas of English settlement, the English were the first and by implication the only Europeans to encounter the Indian. English relations with the Powhatan Confederacy and Indians dealing with the Goose Creek men of Carolina are especially interesting subjects in this book. Wright's unusual approach is fascinating because it proposes a different perspective.

Wright uses the word "tragic" in his subtitle and often this is dangerous. But here he has justified the use of this term. Chapter 6, "Brands and Slave Cords," is the key chapter of the book. This chapter, devoted to Indian slavery, is about the subject which plays a significant role in the other eleven chapters of the book. The pages of this volume recount the heartbreaking enslavement, often with the assistance of members of rival tribes, of the American Indian in the Old South. Wright shows that the Spanish deserved their infamous reputation for enslaving the Indian. He also emphasizes that the English enslaved far greater numbers of Native Americans in the Old South than those unfortunate Indians captured by the Spanish. The book recounts many instances of Indian enslave-

ment during the period between the 1680's and the 1730's when there was a tremendous labor shortage in the new world. Wright observes that the notorious crushing of the Apalachee in Queen Anne's War was the largest slave raid in North America.

He also explodes the myth that Indians could not adapt to slavery. In his narrative he emphasizes the close relationship between blacks and southern Indians. Many Indian cultural inventions were adapted and refined by the southern black. Contending that the southern black today is a product of close contact with Indian and white society, Wright notes that blacks continued to use adaptations of Indian cultural inventions long after the Indians were removed to the trans-Mississippi West.

He does not neglect recounting the sickening tale of European invasion, subjugation and eventual removal of the southern Indian. This long overdue, well-researched, thought-provoking book is a significant contribution to the history of the American Indian.

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EDITOR'S NOTE:

The Department of Archives and History, like every state agency supported by the State's General Fund, is under a 15% proration order. We regret that, because of this budget cut, we will not be able to continue publication of the *Quarterly* in Fiscal Year 1982-83.

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